

<sup>5</sup>  
VIRGINIA. *K*

A

TRAGEDY.

As it is acted at the

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN

*DRURY-LANE,*

By His MAJESTY'S Servants.



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D U B L I N :

Printed for G. FAULKNER, J. EXSHAW, J. ES-  
DALL, R. JAMES, R. MAIN, and H. SAUN-  
DERS, Booksellers. 1754.



TO  
THE RIGHT HONORABLE  
THE  
EARL AND COUNTESS OF COVENTRY,  
THIS TRAGEDY,  
IN GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT  
OF THEIR  
POWERFUL PROTECTION AND FAVOR,  
IS INSCRIBED,  
BY THEIR MOST OBLIGED,  
AND  
MOST OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,  
THE AUTHOR.

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# Advertisement.

THE Author cannot suffer this Tragedy to be published, without acknowledging the Obligations he is under to Mr. GARRICK, not only for his masterly performance in the representation——(that is nothing new) And for his Prologue and Epilogue, which have met with universal applause, but likewise for his friendly Advice, by which the Play is certainly rendered much more Dramatic than it was at first. By the same Advice, some passages are restored in the printing, which were omitted in the representation. The *Reader*, perhaps, may excuse this small addition to the length of the Scenes ; but with the *Spectator*, Brevity will atone for a number of Deficiencies.

Mrs. CIBBER, in particular, and the other Performers, in general, should have the Author's thanks, for the great justice they have done him, did not the applauses of the Town make any thing, that he could say, unnecessary.

## Dramatis Personæ.

### M E N.

APPIUS, chief of the Decemvirs	Mr. MOSSOP.
L. VIRGINIUS, a Plebeian Centurion.	} M. GARRICK.
LUCIUS ICILIUS, a young Plebeian, late Tribune of the People.	
CLAUDIUS, a Patrician, a dependant on APPIUS.	} Mr. ROSS.
RUFUS, a Plebeian, a creature of CLAUDIUS.	
CAIUS, freedman to L. VIRGINIUS.	} Mr. DAVIES.
	} Mr. MOZEEEN.
	} Mr. CLOUGH.

### W O M E N.

VIRGINIA, daughter to L. VIRGINIUS.	} Mrs. CIBBER.
MARCIA, sister to CLAUDIUS.	
PLAUTIA, VIRGINIA's nurse and governess.	} Mrs. GRAHAM.
	} Mrs. BENNET.

Guards, Lictors, Attendants, &c.

Scene R O M E.

# PROLOGUE.

Written and Spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

PROLOGUES, like compliments, are loss of time,  
'Tis penning bows, and making legs in rhyme :  
'Tis cringing at the door with simpering grin,  
When we should shew the company within——  
So thinks our Bard, who stiff in classic knowledge,  
Preserves too much the buckram of the college——  
Lord, Sir, said I, an audience must be woo'd,  
And, lady-like, with flattery pursu'd,  
They nauseate fellows, that are blunt, and rude.— }  
Authors should learn to dance as well as write— }  
Dance at my time of life ! Zounds what a sight ! }  
Grown gentlemen ('tis advertis'd) do learn by night. }  
Your modern Prologues, and such whims as these—  
The Greeks ne'er knew—turn, turn to Sophocles—  
I read no Greek, Sir,—when I was at School,  
Terence had Prologues—Terence was no fool :  
He had, but why ? (reply'd the bard in rage) }  
Exotics, monsters, had possess'd the stage, }  
But we have none, in this enlighten'd age ! }  
Your Britons now, from Gallery to Pit,  
Can relish nought, but sterling, Attic wit :  
Here, take my play, I meant it for instruction, }  
If rhymes are wanting for its introduction, }  
E'en let that nonsense be your own production. }  
Off went the Poet—it is now expedient,  
I speak as Manager, and your Obedient—  
I, as your Cat'rer, would provide you dishes,  
Dress'd to your palates, season'd to your wishes——  
Say but you're tir'd with boil'd and roast at home,  
We too can send for niceties from Rome :  
To please your tastes will spare nor pains nor money,  
Discard Sirloins, and get you Maccaroni.

*Whate'er new Gusto for a time may reign,  
Shakespear and Beef must have their turn again——*

*If novelties can please, to-night we've two——  
Tho' English both, yet spare 'em as they're new——  
To one at least your usual favor show——  
A female asks it, can a man say no?——  
Should you indulge our \* novice yet unseen,  
And crown her with your hands a tragic Queen;  
Should you with smiles a confidence impart,  
To calm those fears which speak a feeling heart;  
Assist each struggle of ingenuous shame  
Which curbs a genius in its road to fame;  
With one wish more, her whole ambition ends——  
She hopes some merit, to deserve such friends.*

\* A new actress.

Advertise-

ACT I. SCENE I.

CLAUDIUS, RUFUS.

*Ruf.* Old age, and frantic dreams of *Rome*, and  
glory,

Have turn'd his visionary brain.

*Claud.* Saw'st thou  
With what impetuous haste, and eager looks,  
He issued forth?

*Ruf.* What is the cause?

*Claud.* A fummons  
Is juſt arriv'd, that calls him to the camp;  
A battle is expected ev'ry hour:  
'Tis lucky, and will favor the deſign  
Of our Decemvir on his beauteous daughter.

*Ruf.* This rash pursuit of a contracted Maid,  
I fear, will have some fatal end.—Should *Aspius*  
Employ his pow'r!—I tremble at the thought!  
*Virginus* is ador'd throughout the tribes;  
His silver hairs, his honor, his rough eloquence,  
Would fire all *Rome*!—We must find out some way



To turn him from so desperate a course.

*Claud.* Impossible and vain!—His headlong passions  
Mock all controul.—Of that no more.—I tell thee,  
No choice is left but to contrive the means  
To sooth her to his arms.

*Ruf.* To sooth her, *Claudius*?

Thou know'st she is contracted; nay, with fondness  
She loves the people's darling, young *Scilius*;  
He who so bravely serv'd them as their Tribune.  
Will she be won by arts of soft persuasion  
To quit his graceful form, his youth and ardor,  
For the stern aspect, and declining years  
Of *Appius*?

*Claud.* Hard it seems; yet not impossible:  
I hav't in charge to make th' attempt at least  
Without delay.

*Ruf.* What?—While the hot Centurion  
Remains in *Rome*?

*Claud.* He is set forth already  
From his own gates; and now, within few minutes,  
Will turn his back on *Rome*; his pride and honor  
Will spur him to the camp with fiery speed;  
There's danger there, and glory to be won!  
Th' attempt is safe; nor must we lose a moment:  
When once the battle's o'er, he will return,  
Perhaps with conquest flush'd, and doubly arm'd  
With pow'r t' oppose us.

*Ruf.* It can ne'er succeed.

*Claud.* Could we prevail but on my sister *Marcia*?—  
She is *Virginia*'s trusted friend—She might  
Work glorious mischief!

*Ruf.* *Marcia*?—Gen'rous *Marcia*?—  
Will she combine in such dark practices? —————  
The jarring elements as soon would mix  
Their contraries!

*Claud.* What if herself she lov'd  
*Scilius*?

*Ruf.* Heavens!

*Claud.* If both my eyes, and ears,  
Deceive me not, sh' as deeply wounded, *Rufus*.

*Ruf.* I'm all amaz'd——if this be so —————

*Claud.*



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*Claud.* Ay, *Rufus*——

If this be so, then where are truth and honor ?  
Let trusty nature, and warm passion work  
In woman's breast—I ask no more—'tis true,  
It sounds well, this long list of titled virtues ;  
But it weighs little.

*Ruf.* Have you try'd her yet ? ——  
It promises——

*Claud.* Some distant hints I've dropp'd ;  
I've talk'd of *Appius'* marriage with *Virginia*,  
And blam'd the rigid edict that forbids  
Patrician and Plebeian blood to mix :  
My purpose was to sound her ; for thou know'st  
Her birth is of the noblest ; but *Isilius*  
Is of Plebeian race.

*Ruf.* How heard she this ?

*Claud.* With silent, deep attention : but her eyes,  
And her emotion, told me all within——  
Methinks I hear her voice—go, *Rufus*—haste  
To *Appius*—tell him, that I go to pay  
Obedience to his will ; and in the Forum  
Will let him know th' event, and wait his pleasure.

[*Exit Rufus.*]

*Enter MARCIA.*

*Marc.* I came not on design to interrupt  
Your earnest conference ——

*Claud.* *Marcia*, to thee  
My soul knows no reserve ; but longs to share  
Her troubles, hopes, and fears ; each rising thought,  
Each weakness, and each want, with faithful *Marcia* !

*Marc.* Thou seem'st—disturb'd—that brow with care  
o'erclouded  
Denotes a storm within.

*Claud.* Too truly guess'd !  
Thy aid I want, thy counsel. let me tell thee  
The weight that my soul labours with !

*Marc.* My brother,  
Thy griefs are all my own ; and if the world  
Contain a remedy, to purchase it,  
I'll give my means, my life, my all, as freely,  
As I give forth this air I draw !

*Claud.*

*Claud.* Oh, *Marcia*!——

*Virginia*—she, she is the cause——

*Marc.* *Virginia*?

My dear and generous friend!—What means my brother?

This instant I expect her——

*Claud.* [*interrupting her*]—What *Virginia*?—  
Expect her here?—Oh say!——

*Marc.* Shall I conceal  
From *Claudius* aught? It were to wrong his love.—  
Know then, this day  *Icilius* secretly  
Intends to enter *Rome*——

*Claud.* Heavens!—on what cause?—  
Ha!—sure he has not heard—it cannot be—— [*aside.*]

*Marc.* Th' impatience of a lover—thro' my means.  
He begs to meet the object of his wishes;  
To steal a look! to breathe a sigh!—no more——

*Claud.* But knows *Virginia* his intent?

*Marc.* She does not;  
I only sent to intreat her to pass hither.

*Claud.* *Marcia*, I do conjure thee by the gods,  
By all thou hold'st most dear, attend and hear me!  
Prevent their meeting, break this fatal match,  
Or *Appius* stung to frenzy, will commit  
Some act of desperation!—Oh 'twill save  
Thy friends, thy brother, *Appius*, nay *Virginia*,  
And *Rome* itself perhaps from instant ruin!

*Marc.* Ah, *Claudius*! whither wouldst thou lead  
me?—think,  
Think, what I owe to friendship and to honor!

*Claud.* Honor commands all private ties should yield  
To public good; wouldst thou behold our streets  
Strown with the carcases of slaughter'd citizens?  
And *Tyber's* wave run purple with their blood?  
Ha, civil discord, *Marcia*!

*Marc.* Gods, cut short  
My thread of life, ere that dread hour arrives!

*Claud.* 'Tis ev'n at hand, and like a horrid comet,  
Hangs o'er our fated heads, portending plagues  
And gen'ral desolation to mankind!

*Marc.* Why dost thou tempt me with these shapes of  
terror

To

To my perdition?—I dare be unhappy,  
 Unhappy, but not base!—Oh my *Virginia*!  
 Companion of my youth!—the tender band  
 Of amity, that link'd our infancy,  
 Grew with our growth, and ripen'd with our years,  
 Shall I now break the sacred knot with treason?—  
 *Icilius* too—a friend——What have I said?——  
 A friend!—Ah, *Marcia*, would he were no more!  
 —But hush my sighs!—[*aside*] how shall I look on him,  
 When he shall know, that *Marcia* was the serpent,  
 That stung his heart?

*Claud.* *Icilius*?—hear me *Marcia*—  
 If thou would'st save *Icilius* from destruction,  
 Burst all the ties that bind him to *Virginia*;  
 By heav'n's, his very life, his being, all,  
 Depend on thy compliance.

*Marc.* Ha! his life!—  
 Said'st thou his life!—be still, my trembling heart.[*aside*]

*Claud.* Disorder'd! [*aside*]

*Marc.* Must *Icilius*' life then pay  
 The purchase of his love?

*Claud.* 'Tis as I wish'd——[*aside*.  
 Can *Marcia* ask?—should *Appius*' hopes be blasted!  
 Think'st thou he'd e'er endure a hated rival  
 Should live to triumph o'er him, and possess  
 The prize he lost?—To pierce *Icilius*' heart,  
 And glut his fierce revenge, *Appius* would wade  
 Thro' seas of blood!

*Marc.* Look down, ye pitying gods,  
 Or I am lost! [*aside*]

*Claud.* Dislodge this fatal image,  
 That fills *Virginia*'s breast; make room for *Appius*;  
 Trust me the time will come, when ev'n *Icilius*  
 Shall thank thy care, and bless the hand that sav'd him.  
 A more auspicious love shall crown his wishes,  
 And kinder stars shall reign!

*Marc.* I dare not, cannot——

*Claud.* Enough—thou hast decreed *Icilius*' fall,  
 And all must go to wreck. [*going.*]

*Marc.* Distract me not!——  
 Oh stay!—tho' I should try to plead for *Appius*,

What

What could I hope?—Repulse, reproach, and shame  
At once would dash th' attempt——

*Claud.* To plead for *Appius*?  
Feeble and vain!—Thou must sow discord, *Marcia*,  
Between the lovers; *Appius* then may prosper.

*Marc.* Most foul, and horrid!

*Claud.* 'Tis a righteous fraud  
To cheat 'em into safety—but no more—  
Heav'n points the only way to peace, and bliss;  
If thou wilt not pursue it, take th' event.

*Marc.* Oh love! oh virtue! how you tear this heart!  
[*aside.*

Means *Appius* nobly? Does he purpose marriage,  
And holy rites?

*Claud.* 'Tis his soul's utmost wish  
To call *Virginia* his, and by a claim,  
The proudest blood of *Rome* might glory in.

*Enter a SLAVE.*

*Sla.* The daughter of *Virginus* is arrived,  
And entering now the gates. [Exit Slave.

*Claud.* Now, *Marcia*, hear me:  
Let me go forth to meet her, let me seize  
The blest occasion, and in softest terms  
Sooth her young bosom with th' illustrious conquest  
Her charms have made—I'll tell her thou art absent—  
Soon to return—She must not see  *Icilius*——  
Beware of that—leave me to plead for *Appius*—  
I'll blazon out the purity, and ardor  
Of his bright flame, his dignity, and merit;  
I'll warm with love, or dazzle with ambition,  
Her heart, if it be cast in woman's mould:  
*Marcia*, farewell! Be constant, and remember,  
Thy friends, thy country, all, demand this service!

[Exit Claudius.

*Marc.* Thy country, and thy friends, demand this  
service——

Ah me!—he little thinks what passes here!

[Striking her Breast.

What conflicts!—what despair!—he little knows  
The busy, secret spring, that heaves unseen  
Within this beating breast, and drives me on



To do a deed!—relentless, cruel love!  
 What ravage hast thou made within this bosom!  
 Which nature fashion'd in her softest mould,  
 And fitted it for truth and gentle pity!——  
 But thou has ruin'd all!—Thou hast let in  
 The furies, and their horrid train upon me!  
 Thou hast undone poor *Marcia*!—Oh, *Icilius*!  
 Why did I ever see thy fatal form!  
 Why did'st thou chuse me out to be thy friend,  
 And tell to me the story of thy love,  
 Warm from the heart!—the flame infected me!—  
 And can I see thee bleed?—Oh love and fortune,  
 Guard the dear youth!—Reserve your sharpest bolts  
 For me!—Witness, ye gods, I am content  
 To be a wretch—But bless, oh bless *Icilius*!  
[Exit *Marcia*.]

S C E N E II. *The Forum.*

L. VIRGINIUS, CAIUS.

*L. Virg.* Say'st thou *Horatius* is set free?*Caius.* This morn,

By an express command from the Decemvirs,  
 The Licitors have releas'd him.

*L. Virg.* Then 'tis well——

I but delay'd my march till he was safe—  
 But by the gods, this outrage touches nearly,  
 And calls for quick redress—Our senators  
 Thus wrong'd for rising in the cause of liberty?—  
*Valerius* silenc'd, and the brave *Horatius*  
 Condemn'd to bonds and death?

*Caius.* 'Tis now pretended,  
 The earnest intercession of the senate  
 Hardly obtain'd this boon.

*L. Virg.* Mean, shallow art!

If he is freed, their fears, and not their mercy  
 Have loos'd his chains!—Their dreaded pow'r now  
 shakes!

They feel it too—Last night th' incens'd Plebeians,  
 Gathering in desperate throngs around the senate,  
 With their repeated clamours scar'd the colour

From

From their pale cheeks, till on their seat of judgment  
They trembled, *Caius* ! Nay their hundred Listors—  
But see where *Appius* comes, their chief——

*Caius. Virginius,*

Retire—tempt not his rage—Your noble friend  
Is safe—The camp demands your service now——  
Avoid his fight ; nor with your presence rouse  
The smother'd flames of discord.

*L. Virg. Shall I fly*

From *Appius* ?——Here I'll stay and dare his worst !  
And if his brutal pride provoke my anger,  
I swear, ev'n from the fulness of my heart  
I'll pour it on him !

*Caius. Yet be calm——*

*L. Virg. No more——*

When bold oppression stalks, let come what may,  
Honor and age shall hold their course——[*Exit Caius.*

*Enter APPIUS.*

*Appius. Virginius,*

Your friend yet lives ; the senate have prevail'd ;  
And their united pray'rs at length have sav'd him  
From the *Tarpeian* rock——Advise him well  
To curb his insolence.—Let him beware  
How he again affronts the sovereign pow'r  
With that seditious tongue, unless he means  
To pay the forfeit with his life.

*L. Virg. 'Tis well——*

Th' imperial stile of kings, and *Tarquin's* reign  
Seem now return'd ; and we must learn to tremble,  
When *Appius* thunders !

*Appius. Think'st thou the Decemvirate,*

In whom the majesty of *Rome* resides,  
So weak in strength, or counsel, that each citizen  
Commission'd by his pride, shall dare unquestion'd  
T' arraign their power and office, give a-loose  
To his invective rage, and brave his masters ?  
But say, *Virginius*, why art thou a foe ?  
Thou hast not felt the weight of sov'reign power,  
Thy family, tho' of Plebeian rank,  
Rever'd, and honor'd ; favor and distinction,

Have



Have still pursu'd thy steps, and grac'd thy virtues ;  
 Why then such spleen to the Decemvirate ?  
 Why so much care to foster and support  
 Th' unruly Tribes ?

*L. Virg.* Because I love mankind ;  
 And therefore am an enemy to tyrants.

*Appius.* Call'st thou these clods mankind ? things  
 made for use,  
 To be impell'd or check'd, goaded or curb'd,  
 As higher spirits direct ?

*L. Virg.* It seems then, *Appius*,  
 The Roman people are mere flocks and herds ;  
 Permitted for awhile to graze and fatten ;  
 Then to be fleec'd, or slaughter'd at thy will.

*Appius.* Not all, *Virginus*—some must draw the yoke,  
 And carry burdens.

*L. Virg.* Insolent Usurper !  
 Dar'st thou to triumph in a nation's sorrows ?  
 Nay revel o'er her ruins ? Righteous Gods !  
 Brought ye your boasted laws from *Greece*, to trample  
 On those of Nature, and your groaning Country ?

*Appius.* By Heav'n's, thou mov'st my laughter, more  
 than wrath !  
 Want ye your Consuls, your seditious Tribunes,  
 To drive th' ungovern'd herd at your own list ?  
 For this, ye seek the rabble, make harangues,  
 Complain of wrongs and speech it in the Forum.

*L. Virg.* Foe to thy country ! what's that im-  
 pious power,  
 Which the Decemvirate abuse so grossly,  
 First gain'd by fraud, now held by violence ?  
 Is't not mere sacrilege, and usurpation ?  
 With all the fatal arts of dark ambition,  
 Did ye not practise on the Tribes, to pave  
 Your way to empire ? Nay, thou haughty tyrant,  
 Their chief, whose fierce and barb'rous pride was wont  
 To spurn the commons, quickly learn'd'st to smooth  
 That rugged brow, and court the dregs of *Rome* !  
 The populace thus moulded to your purpose,  
 Ye threw aside the mask, and with bold robbery,  
 Seiz'd sovereign power !

*Appius.*

*Appius.* Ay, and will hold it too,  
In spite of thee, *Valerius*, and *Horatius*!

*L. Virg. Valerius*, and *Horatius*, once were names  
Fatal to Tyrants! Their great ancestors  
Once join'd their virtues 'gainst the haughty *Tarquins*,  
Together sluic'd their veins in honor's cause,  
And purchas'd immortality! — Will these,  
Who wear their Father's names forget their glories?  
No, proud Decemvir; thou shalt find their spirits  
Live in their sons! Some sparks of liberty,  
In Roman breasts, tho' faint, yet still alive,  
Blown by their breaths may kindle to a flame:  
The gen'rous fire shall catch from soul to soul,  
O'erbear all opposition, blast our foes,  
Purge off the foul infection we've contracted,  
And melt this drossy age, to purest gold!

*Appius.* Why then the fate of the Decemvirate,  
Is fixt, it seems, and here their pow'r must end;  
'For so the great *Virginus* has decreed!

*L. Vir.* Thou triumph'st, Tyrant! — but the  
time will come,

(Perhaps is not far off) when thy misdeeds,  
Accumulated, ripe for punishment,  
Shall burst upon thy head, wake slumbering vengeance,  
And justify the Gods! — Rome feels at length  
Thy galling chain, and pants to shake it off;  
The mist, that popular favor threw around thee,  
Is vanish'd, and she sees thee as thou art!  
Cover'd with crimes! — Fraud, rapine, perjury!  
Now starts to light the murder of brave *Siccus*,  
And thy base hand red with his patriot blood!

*Appius.* Confusion! —

*L. Virg.* Ha, Decemvir! — Does it sting thee?  
With murder-lust is coupled! thy fell bosom  
No pity knows! — The cries of innocence,  
The lover's groans, the pangs of husbands, parents,  
Are but as goads to spur thy brutal appetite!  
But think not yet our spirits are so tam'd,  
So broke by constant wrongs — With instant march,  
I'll join the camp — the gallant bands shall know,  
While they drop blood for Rome, what chains are  
forging To

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To fetter those victorious hands that sav'd  
Their Country!—yes, Decemvir!—and ere long  
Expect their thanks!—— [Exit L. *Virginus*.

*Appius*. By heav'ns thou hast awak'd,  
A fire that shall consume thee!—— Have I tam'd  
The fiercest spirits in *Rome*, quell'd the proud senate,  
And bent their necks beneath my yoke, to shrink  
When a grey-headed ruffian storms?— Shalt thou  
Controul my will?—thy Daughter, proud Plebeian,  
Shall quit thy insolence! *Appius* from her  
Shall seek redress, and on her panting bosom,  
Receive the dear amends!

*Enter Claudius.*

*Appius*. Now, *Claudius*, now ——  
What bring'st thou from the lovely fair?

*Claud*. Repulse ——  
Reproach, despair —— nay, scarce her fears suppress'd  
Her rising scorn —— *Icilius* reigns unrivall'd  
Within her breast, nor is there room for *Appius*.

*Appius*. Shall *Appius* then at last become the scoff  
Of a Plebeian girl? —— That haughty *Appius*,  
Who with a nod has taught the state to tremble?  
No —— by the gods she's mine! ——

*Claud*. Consider, *Appius* ——

*Appius*. Away — she shall be mine — her fate's decreed —  
I check'd my impetuous wishes, till her Father  
Had turn'd his back on *Rome*, nay, bore his insolence  
Till I e'en burst with rage —— Then, but I mark'd  
His daughter for my prey, I'd like a tyger  
Leap'd at his throat! —— But now my boiling blood  
No more can brook restraint —— I am repuls'd,  
And vengeance shall have way! —— I will possess her,  
Tho' all *Rome* sink to lowest *Tartarus*;  
And drag me headlong with her cumb'rous ruins!

*Claud*. Is this the Hero, whose superior greatness  
Has won an empire?

*Appius*. *Claudius*, I am mad! ——  
I'm on the rack! —— My soul, with all her functions,  
Chain'd

Chain'd down, and prison'd, that she cannot stir  
To shake her heavy load off, and escape  
From this devouring fire !

*Claud.* Now, gods above  
Whom we adore, what spell has chang'd thee thus ?  
And backward turn'd the course of thy strong nature,  
Inflexible till now ? ——— Severe, unmov'd,  
Defying Love's sweet pow'rs, and all his train  
Of gentle sighs and wishes !

*Appius.* Wouldst thou have me  
Tell o'er the tale of my dishonor ? — Dwell on  
Each point and circumstance of my defeat,  
And parcel out my shame ? — Thou shalt be satisfy'd,  
If the hot blood, that rises to my cheeks,  
Choak not all utterance. ——— One fatal morn,  
As I was seated on my throne of judgment,  
In th' open Forum, the attendant crowd  
Awaiting my decrees, my eyes were struck  
With a young damsel that pass'd slowly by me,  
Attended only by one female slave.  
Oh *Venus*, what a grace ! — What heavenly sweetness ! —  
What looks ! — On th' instant, troubled and disorder'd,  
Trembling all o'er, I felt a pain unusual,  
Yet mix'd with strange delight, shoot nimbly thro' me,  
And thrill in ev'ry vein ! — Quite fixt and motionless  
Sometime I sat, nor heard the noisy Orator  
Haranguing long and loud ! — My senses all  
Seal'd up, except these eyes, which still pursu'd her :  
When suddenly I rose from my Tribunal,  
Dismiss'd the crowd, and gath'ring up my robe  
In haste, I followed her.

*Claud.* Great *Hercules* !  
Couldst thou see this ? ———

*Appius.* Before I quite had reach'd her,  
She enter'd, with her slave, the public schools,  
By custom destin'd to our *Roman* maids ;  
Here suddenly I stopp'd — here I stood rooted —  
My eyes devouring her ! ———

*Claud.* Ye powers of love,  
Who shall henceforth oppose your boundless sway !

*Appius.*



*Appius.* Thus I remain'd entranc'd ; and at my eyes  
 Drank in her beauties, and with them deep draughts  
 Of poison, how delicious !—If she mov'd,  
 What grace !—Or if she mingled in the dance  
 Among the blooming virgins, *Dian's* self,  
 Amidst her woodland nymphs she seem'd !—At length,  
 The exercises o'er, a lyre she took,  
 A deep-strung lyre, and to harmonious chords  
 Pour'd out such melting strains, as would have staid  
 Th' uplifted arm of angry *Jove*, in act  
 To deal his thunder on a guilty world !

*Claud.* In what bright forms a raptur'd lover's fancy  
 Paints the all perfect fair one ?——But, proceed :  
 What follow'd this ?

*Appius.* At last, the sports being ended,  
 She issued forth——When strait the eyes of all  
 Were turn'd on her alone—Surpriz'd, abash'd,  
 Her lovely face o'erspread with rosy blushes,  
 That witness'd sweet confusion, she let drop  
 Her veil, and homeward mov'd with decent pace,  
 Timid and silent !—Ever since that day,  
 That fatal day, my soul has known no rest !  
 The venom'd shaft still rankles in my bosom :  
 Still, as I pass that way, I stop and gaze !——  
 A monstrous sight !—*Rome's* awful magistrate  
 A laughter to the people !

*Claud.* This fond passion  
 I see has taken root.—But say, great *Appius*,  
 Couldst thou, inspir'd with love so delicate,  
 For such a charming maid, so soft, so perfect,  
 Couldst thou use force ?—What !—lock thy furious hand  
 In her torn hair, and drag her, shrieking loud,  
 Invoking Heav'n and Earth, and cursing thee !  
 Injure, perhaps, and wound with thy abuses  
 Her polish'd limbs !——By violence tear from her  
 Joys of a moment, insincere, unripe,  
 Not half possess'd !

*Appius.* Oh ! *Claudius*, I will own to thee, with  
 blushes,  
 This untam'd heart is melted to the softness  
 Of a fond, lovesick maid !—Fain would I win

Her

Her gentle soul, possess her pure affections !  
 But, oh, in vain !—Force then must be employ'd ;  
 The desperate, only remedy ———

*Claud.* Hold, *Appius* ! ———  
 What if some luckier chance might yet prevail,  
 And give her to your wishes, charm'd and willing ?  
 Were not that well ? ———

*Appius.* Thou mean'st to trifle with me ! ———  
 But have a care ! ———

*Claud.* Know then my anxious zeal,  
 Still lab'ring in your service, prompted me  
 To crave my sister's aid ; who won at length,  
 By my unwearied pray'r, at length consents  
 To undertake our cause.

*Appius.* That may be something ———  
 She is *Virginia*'s friend ———

*Claud.* 'Tis an event  
 I scarce could hope—And what has mov'd her to't,  
 Unless a secret passion for *Scilius*,  
 Unwarily have stol'n upon her peace ———

*Appius.* Oh Gods, that were such fortune !—  
*Claud.* Discord, *Appius*,  
 Must first destroy their peace—let jealousy  
 Distill her bane to taint their growing loves !  
 Light up resentment ! Fan the dang'rous fire  
 With dark surmises, hints, invented tales,  
 'Till it burst all the tender bands in sunder,  
 That knit their souls ! Then seize the blest occasio  
 Then press her home ; and ere the sudden breach  
 Their jars have made, is clos'd, step in between,  
 And sever 'em for ever !

*Appius.* Now, by heav'ns,  
 Some whisp'ring Deity inspir'd the thought ! ———  
 It may succeed—and then !—I'll fly this moment,  
 And throw me at her feet !—With sighs, and tears,  
 And all the moving eloquence of love,  
 I'll try to melt her heart !—For who can paint,  
 The energy, the transports of a lover ?  
 Methinks I'm sick of pow'r without *Virginia* !  
 I feel a void ! There's something wanting here !

[striking his breast.  
 Come



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Come then, sweet God of love, and crown my wishes,  
And touch the lovely maid with equal fire !——  
I'm wild with transport !—Oh, ye tedious hours,  
Add feathers to your wings ! that I may prove  
Th' united joys of empire and of love !

[*Exeunt.*]

## A C T II. S C E N E I.

*M A R C I A's Apartment.*

*M A R C I A, I C I L I U S, meeting.*

*Mar.* **L** U C I U S *Icilius!* welcome !

*Ici.* Gen'rous *Marcia*,  
Compos'd of faith and honor, constant ever !  
Accept such thanks, as one beyond all bounds  
Oblig'd, can pay !—May the blest Gods above  
Reward thy truth, and, at thy greatest need,  
Grant thee a friend as noble as thyself !

Oh, *Marcia!*—I have seen—

*Mar.* What means, *Icilius*,  
This strange disorder ?

*Ici.* But this morn I left  
Our camp—In one short hour, the space I measur'd  
'Twixt *Algidum* and *Rome*, and fondly hop'd  
In *Marcia's* friendship, and *Virginia's* love  
To banish all my cares——But, as I pass'd  
*Virginus'* gates, these eyes beheld a sight  
That curdled up my blood !—The tyrant *Appius*  
Was coming forth——What may this mean ?

*Mar.* *Icilius*,  
How shall I answer thee ?—In vain, alas !  
Would I conceal what thou too soon must know !  
*Ici.* My heart misgives me !—Does the high thron'd  
villain

Attempt my love !—Oh vengeance, vengeance, *Marcia!*  
Or is't a lover's vain surmise ?——

*Mar*

is breath.  
Come

*Mar.* Oh no !——

*Ici.* I shall grow mad !—distracting, horrid thoughts  
Crowd fast upon me !—*Marcia*, if thy soul  
Be not insensible to ev'ry touch  
Of friendship, or of pity ; if the pangs  
Of bleeding love, and tort'ring jealousy  
Can move thee, speak !—Reveal my misery !  
Suspence is death !

*Mar.*  *Icilius*, that I pity thee,  
The Heavens bear witness for me !

*Ici.* Ah, *Virginia*,  
Thou shalt have justice ;—Nor shall the curst *Appius*  
Invade thy helpless innocence unpunish'd !

*Mar.*  *Icilius*, think of that no more—His pow'r  
Mocks all resistance ! His impetuous will,  
Alone the measure of all right and wrong !  
Inflexible his soul ; nor would he change  
His destin'd purpose, tho' the suppliant earth  
Were humbled to his feet.

*Ici.* Away——his pow'r  
I reckon not—But be sure if he attempt  
Against *Virginia* aught, this hand shall reach him  
Thro' his arm'd listers, tho' each deadly axe  
Were levell'd at this head.

*Mar.* Some dread event,  
I fear, will be the issue of this strife,  
Unless some pitying God look down on *Rome*,  
And either melt the stubborn soul of *Appius*,  
Or move *Icilius* for his country's sake,  
(His country threaten'd to be drench'd in blood !)  
Greatly to quit his claim, and shew the force  
Of *Roman* virtue.

*Ici.* Do I hear aright ?——  
Amazement ! — This from thee ! — *Marcia* ! — the  
friend  
Of my *Virginia* ! — *Marcia*, whose soft pity  
Was wont to be the balm of all my woes !

*Mar.* Ah, *Lucius* ! Couldst thou read within my  
breast  
In what deep characters thy woes are grav'd ;  
Knew'st thou, thy hapless fate alone extorts

The bitter, but yet necessary counsel ;  
Then wouldst thou know too, *Marcia* is not wanting  
In pity to  *Icilius*, nor in faith  
To his *Virginia* !

*Ici.* Still obscure and strange——  
Some myst'ry yet behind — But, *Marcia*, say,  
If I could part from all my soul holds dear,  
Tear from my panting breast this rooted passion,  
And quite forget that e'er I lov'd *Virginia* !  
What would become of her ?—That dear kind maid !  
What would be her despair, lest her condition,  
Should I, on whose firm trust her gentle soul  
Relies, forsake her ?

*Mar.* Is all this distress  
For her alone ?—Lest she should over-grieve  
For such a loss ?

*Ici.* What dark and dreadful meaning  
Lurks underneath these words ?

*Mar.* The mighty gods  
Direct thee for the best !

*Ici.* Thou mak'st me tremble !——  
And yet I know not why—Thou canst not mean——  
Ah, no !—Let me shun that !—My very soul  
Shudd'ring starts back, as from a precipice,  
To look that way !—I dare not think such ruins ! ——  
For were she false !——

*Mar.* *Icilius*, calm thy spirit——  
And stand prepar'd for all—Think it not strange,  
E'en tho' *Virginia* should——

*Ici.* Stop, *Marcia*, stop ! ——  
Think ~~whether~~ thou art going !—Oh, my heart !——  
What feel I here !—The damps of death are on me !—  
What was't ?—Thou said'st ev'n tho' *Virginia* should——  
Should what ?—Speak !——

*Mar.* *Lucius*, my heart bleeds for thee !  
Compose this agony—Alas ! I meant  
By danger, and perhaps too, her young bosom  
Warm'd with ambition, and the flatt'ring hopes ——

*Ici.* Ruin'd !—Betray'd — Undone ! She's false ! —  
'Tis so ! ——





A faith more firm, and a less cruel foe !  
 Yet ere I quit these hated walls for ever,  
 Once more I will behold the perjurd maid ;  
 I will ! and in the bitterness of soul  
 Upbraid her with my wrongs !

[*Going.*

*Mar.* Yet stay,  *Icilius !*

For mercy, but a moment stay, and hear me !

[*Exit Icilius.*

He's gone ! — What have I done ! — A horrid deed ! —  
 Methinks I dread to look within myself,  
 I am so black, so guilty ! — Let me hide me  
 From thought — I dare not think — Ah, poor *Virginia !*  
 Abus'd *Icilius !* — wretched, wretched *Marcia !* [*Exit.*

## S C E N E II.

VIRGINIA'S Apartment.

PLAUTIA, VIRGINIA.

*Plau.* My dearest child take comfort —

*Vir.* Oh, my *Plautia !*

My more than mother ! — Thou, whose tender care  
 Nurs'd up my infant weakness, now my friend ! —  
 What comfort can I know, when all I love  
 Is far away, expos'd to ev'ry chance  
 Of cruel war ! — That dear, that faithful breast,  
 Where my soul lives, where ev'ry wish and hope,  
 As to their center tend, perhaps this moment  
 Bleeds by some hostile spear ! — while fatal *Appius*  
 Most basely in his absence, dares invade  
 The peace and honor of the maid he loves !

*Plau.* The Gods, my child, shall shield thee from  
 his violence !

*Vir.* I do submit me to their gracious will.  
 Perhaps my death — I know not — Methinks, *Plautia*,  
 But for *Icilius*, I could wish to die !  
 And something whispers to my boding soul,  
 (A still and secret voice that speaks within)  
 Ere long I shall !

*Plau.* Banish these idle terrors —  
 The fears of fancy —

*Virg.* *Plautia*, but last night  
The vision of *Lucretia* flood before me !

*Plau.* Alas, my child, it was a dream—no more—

*Virg.* A dream !—this mid-day sun not now beholds  
me,

With senses more awake ! methinks I see,  
And hear her still !—that more than human form !  
That voice ! that action ! grave, majestic, sad ! ——  
Daughter, she said (pointing to a large wound  
On her fair bosom, that yet dropp'd with blood)  
Behold *Lucretia*, who for glory died !  
Remember, that this path is always open  
To virtue, and to fame !—Then sighing, thus ! ——  
She parted from my sight ! ——

*Plau.* 'Twas terrible !

*Virg.* Oh, 'twas a hint from fate—my father absent—  
 *Icilius* too—myself a helpless maid,

Expos'd to all the insolence of power——

*Plautia*, this mighty shade in pity came,  
T' assist my virtue, by her great example,  
And teach me how to die !

*Plau.* *Virginia*, hear me ——

Trust to my cautious age, and ripe experience !  
Ere long thy father will return——with him  
 *Icilius* comes——till then be mild with  *Appius* !  
Sooth his wild rage ; deprive him not of hope ;  
Lest arm'd with pow'r, and stung by thy rash scorn,  
Like a fell wolf, the shepherd far away,  
He wrong thy helpless innocence.

*Virg.* Oh *Plautia* !

Must I dissemble ? flatter ? must I act  
A part my soul abhors ?—unskill'd in arts,  
That false ones use ! ——

*Plau.* Compell'd by strong necessity,  
Such fraud is virtue.

*Virg.* What will fate do with me !  
O heav'ns ! support me, *Plautia*, or I sink ——  
Look where the Tyrant comes ! I cannot bear  
The terror of his presence ! ——

*Plau.* Now beware,  
How you provoke his rage !—be constant, firm,

And



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And meet him with a settled brow— [Exit *Plautia*.

*Enter* APPIUS.

*Virg.* Lord *Appius*! —————

*Ap.* Forgive this rashness, fair *Virginia*,  
That I presume t' appear before you, thus  
Unwelcome to your eyes, and half forbid!  
But oh, the torments not to be endur'd,  
The agonies I feel! They drive me on  
Against all hope!—I would obey, but cannot!  
My trembling limbs unbidden bear me to thee,  
And my fond soul wants power to check their course;  
Ah then! if thou hast pity in thy nature,  
If e'er that tender bosom heav'd with sighs,  
At some sad tale of wretched, hopeless love,  
Bleeding, distracted, torn with wild despair,  
Look, look on me! for all that woe is mine!

*Virg.* It ill befits the glory of great *Appius*  
To mock an humble maid —————

*Ap.* Alas, *Virginia*! —————

Mock thee?—but well I know thou canst not mean it!  
Mock thee!—by heav'ns, all greatness, power, and pride,  
Empire, and rule, degraded fall before thee,  
And vanish into nothing!—Turn not from me! —

*Virg.* My lord, my lord!—without reproach and  
shame

How may a *Roman* virgin dare to listen  
To words like these?—and in a father's absence? —  
And what can the great high born *Appius* mean,  
But scorn, and ruin to *Virginia*?

*Ap.* Cruel!

Thou know'st —————

*Virg.* My lord, I know my humble lot  
Has plac'd me far beneath you; yet this heart  
Is not less sensible of shame, and baseness,  
Than if it beat with high Patrician blood.

*Ap.* By heav'ns thou wrong'st my meaning and my  
honor;

My love is pure as thy own rosy blushes!

*Virg.* My lord, you wrong yourself, you wrong  
your glory,

And that of your immortal ancestors,  
By such a mean pursuit—some noble dame——

*Ap.* Talk not of others!—Thou alone hast empire,  
Within this breast!—Others there are, 'tis true,  
And noble too—but ah, how unlike thee!  
My soul grows dull, and sickens at their sight——  
Oh charming maid! Thou'rt of a different mould!  
Thy sweetness, innocence, and artless truth,  
Thy nameless graces, and thy virtues join'd,  
Ennoble thee above all high descent,  
And dignify my choice! and here, I swear  
I mean thee for my bride!

*Virg.* Away, my lord——  
Have you forgot th' inviolable law,  
Yourself ordain'd, that interdicts such union?

*Ap.* Have I deserv'd so little of my country,  
As not to claim an instant revocation  
Of any law, that dooms me to be wretched?  
Before to-morrow's sun awake the world,  
It shall be done——

*Virg.* I must not, dare not hear  
Language like this—— my lord, let me intreat you  
To leave me till my father be return'd;  
The daughter of a *Roman* citizen  
Cannot without a stain admit such visits.

*Ap.* Cruel!—what banish me from thy lov'd sight  
For days!—whole days and nights!—it must not be!  
Here let me fall, and breath my faithful vows!  
Here, on the spotless altar of thy hand,  
Swear endless truth and love!

*Virg.* Rise, rise, my lord!

[*kneeling.*

[*alarm'd.*

*Enter ICILIUS.*

*Ici.* Ha! do I see aright!

*Virg.* *ICILIUS* here!

*Ap.* He here!—curst chance!—— [Aside.

*Ici.* By all the pow'rs above,  
'Tis so!—ev'n as she said!—sure my kind genius  
Guided me here, that this fond, credulous heart

Might

Might doubt no more, nor longer be abus'd  
By one so false ! so fatal !

*Virg.* Ah ! *Icilius*,

What mean these words ?—Think'st thou——

*Ici.* Madam, 'tis well——

You have done nobly, while this wretch, this drudge,  
Was absent, lab'ring in the fields of death !

You've made a choice most worthy of you—*Appius*

Alone could merit such a heart as yours !——

'Tis true, your vows are mine—but what are vows ?

Your mounting spirit scorns to fly at less

Than empire ! —— Diadems perhaps, and sceptres !

Fit recompence for *Appius* ! mighty *Appius* !

The righteous lawgiver ! the glorious patron

Of liberty, and father of his country !

*Ap.* Insolent Tribune, hence !—dost thou presume  
With scurril taunts ?

*Ici.* What, thou art champion for her !——  
She well deserves it——

*Virg.* Is this well, *Icilius* ?——  
From thee this usage ?

*Ap.* By the Gods, sweet maid,  
I will revenge thy wrongs ! they're mine !— *Plebeian* !  
Thy speech, as base as thy ignoble birth,  
Shall cost thee dear !—respect restrains my rage,  
Or with this arm I would chastise thee hence !

[*Laying his hand on his sword.*

*Ici.* By heav'ns, *Decemvir*, but unsheath thy sword,  
And thou o'erpay'st my wrongs—I'll call thee noble !—  
But I forgot—thy courage is entrusted  
To safer hands—to lictors, guards, and armies.

[*Appius coming up fiercely with his sword  
drawn, Virginia rushes between.*

*Virg.* For mercy hold !—Oh spare my soul these  
terrors,

Nor drive me to despair !——

*Ap.* Thou lovely fair

Compose thy breast !——here at thy feet I lay

My sword and my resentment, and disclaim

Anger, ambition, pride, and ev'ry passion,

But love !——

*Ici.* Is't come to this?—Gods, she avows  
Her perfidy, nor thinks me worth the pains,  
Ev'n of a little poor dissimulation!

*Virg.* His anguish touches me; but conscious pride,  
And injur'd honor, after such an outrage,  
Forbid that he should know it—[*aside*] yes—perhaps  
'Tis true; and thou dost well to think me false;  
Thou see'st I labour not t'evade the charge,  
Nor do I deign an answer!

*Ap.* This goes well ———  
I'll interpose no longer ———

*Ici.* Yes, I see,  
That heart, which once I thought the gift of heav'n  
To bless my days, is sold to base ambition;  
That venal heart!—not giv'n, but sold!—Go then,  
Thou perjurd maid! enjoy thy guilty greatness!  
Go! a new *Tullia*! help thy impious *Tarquin*  
To trample on thy country's bleeding bosom!  
Like her, triumphant on thy haughty car,  
Drive o'er thy rev'rend father's mangled corpse,  
And think no road too short, that leads to empire!

*Vir.* Go thou! nor longer dare to violate  
My ears with thy licentious, brutal speech!  
Go, where I never may behold thee more!

*Ap.* Why this exceeds my hopes!—I thank thee,  
*Marcia*! [ *aside.*

*Ici.* Yes, false one, I will go!—I see my presence  
Is irksome grown to thee; yes, I will go,  
And where thou never shalt behold me more!  
Come, ye fierce *Æqui*, pierce this breast! here make  
A passage for my streaming blood!—The torrent  
Shall wash away *Virginia's* fatal image!  
I too, as well as she, will thank the hand  
That gives the blow!

*Vir.* Resentment, grief, and pity,  
Tear up my soul!—Alas, these starting tears  
Will tell what passes here! [ *aside, striking her breast.*

*Ici.* Now, cruel maid,  
Farewel!——a long, and last farewel for ever!  
I will not call upon the mighty Gods



To punish thee, or to avenge my wrongs——  
 No —— while this breath of life remains, I cannot,  
 I cannot curse *Virginia*! —— that lov'd name,  
 That once lov'd name, is dear to me ev'n still!  
 This only —— 'midst the glories of thy triumph,  
 Mayst thou remember, not without a pang,  
 Him whom thou hast undone! the wretch  *Icilius* !  
 Who lov'd thee with such —— but no more —— Farewel.  
[Going.]

*Vir.* Oh stay, yet stay, *Icilius* !

*Ap.* No, let him go. [Exit *Icilius*]

And elsewhere vent his base Plebeian insolence,  
 While *Appius* at thy feet ——

*Vir.* Off! —— hold me not! ——

What, is he gone? —— distraction! madness! death!  
 Return, return, *Icilius*. ——

[Attempting to follow, but held by *Appius*.]

*Ap.* Fair *Virginia*,

He merits not thy love; despise, forget him;  
 And oh, let faithful *Appius* bending thus,  
 Embracing thus thy knees! ——

*Vir.* [Still struggling to follow *Icilius*, but held by *Appius*.]

My life! my *Lucius*! ——

He's gone! for ever gone! —— hence, barb'rous tyrant!  
 Pollute me not with thy infected touch,  
 Nor longer blast my sight with a such a monster!  
 Is't not enough thou hast undone my peace,  
 Blotted my fame, drove from my longing eyes  
 My only love, despairing, bent on death,  
 Stabb'd to the heart with the empoison'd thought  
 That his *Virginia*'s false? —— And would thy cruelty  
 Yet farther torture me?

*Ap.* Ha, is it thus? ——

Dost thou then own thy love for him, thy hate  
 For me? —— 'tis well —— by Heav'n's, I thank thy rage!  
 It has forc'd out, before thou wert away,  
 The secret of thy soul, conceal'd till now,  
 And all thy art's unveil'd! —— but for this chance,  
 I had been fool'd —— thy looks of seeming mildness,  
 Thy gentle soothing speech, and soft demeanor,



(Hollow and false !) had almost vanquish'd me,  
And chang'd my fixt resolves,—but since 'tis thus  
I'm spurn'd, and my fond, generous, ardent passion  
Thus treated——

*Vir.* Hence, with thy detested passion,  
To fiends and furies, black as thy own soul,  
If such there be! and leave me to the sorrows,  
Which thou hast heap'd upon me!

*Ap.* Now, by *Hercules*,  
*Appius* again shall be himself——proud fair,  
Thou hast thy wish——hence, trifling love, begone!  
I give thee to the winds! my passion's o'er,  
And nought but lusty appetite remains,  
Which, spite of all thy peevish scorn, and rage,  
I will indulge to such luxurious height,  
That gorg'd at length, and glutted, it shall sicken,  
And turn away from thy pall'd charms with loathing!  
Nor shall my vengeance rest unsatisfy'd——

*Scilius*—He, thy minion! soon shall find  
What 'tisto have pull'd down on his crush'd head  
The wrath of *Appius*!—Now, go storm and rage!  
Thou shalt have cause!-----For ere to morrow's sun  
Be sunk to rest, I'll meet thee, haughty maid!  
As mighty *Jove* met *Semele*!——in thunder!

[*Exit Appius.*]

*Virg.* (*After some pause, and looking wildly about her.*)  
Where shall I fly!—Terror, remorse, despair,  
Surround me!—Heav'n and earth abandon me!—  
*Scilius* gone—perhaps to death—Thou wretch!  
Whose fatal pride has plung'd thee in this gulph  
Of horror, view thyself! and then grow mad!  
Distraction!——is there no relief for woe  
Like mine?—No hope in store?—Quick, let me fly!—  
Oh, bear me, winds, to my *Scilius*' bosom,  
Ere stung with grief, and rage, he quit for ever  
These hated walls!—retard his flight, ye pow'rs!  
And let these streaming eyes, and breaking heart  
To gentle pity melt the gen'rous youth,  
And clear my love, my honor, and my truth. [Exit.]

## ACT III. SCENE I.

*MARCIA'S Apartment.*

APPIUS, CLAUDIUS, MARCIA.

*Claud.* **H**AST thou well weigh'd th' event?—Consider, *Appius*,  
When once th' attempt is made, there's no retreat;  
To fail were ruin.

*Appius.* Cease thy groundless fears;  
Th' event is sure; thy claim is plausible;  
Thy proofs most clear; my hardy Veterans,  
That crowd in throngs, all ready to avouch  
Whate'er I dictate; and myself thy judge.  
Thou art ungrateful, *Claudius*—Ha!—methinks  
Thou art much bound to me, who strive to gain thee.  
So fair a slave!—What say'st thou, gentle *Marcia*?

*Marc.* This black contrivance startles me—this  
shews me

My own offence—what, seize her as a slave!  
A free-born maid! and with hir'd perjury,  
Miscreants suborn'd, and bought for gold, despoil her  
Of liberty, of innocence, of peace,  
Of spotless fame!—Thou can'st not be so base!

*Appius.* It seems that *Marcia*, then of all her sex,  
Is turn'd an advocate for faith, and honor!

*Marc.* Upbraid me, well thou may'st—my own sad  
heart,

Conscious of guilt, upbraids me yet more bitterly,  
And tells me, the severe reproach is just;  
Yet thanks to the blest Gods, at length these eyes  
Are open'd, and my slumbring virtue wakes!

*Appius.* Hence, all ye idle sects of vain Philosophers!  
Sages, and Moralists, and prating Sophists!  
Hence, with your pedant wisdom!—I'll no more on't—  
Let me learn truth and virtue from a Woman!  
Now, *Marcia*, hear (to show the deep effects

Of

Of thy reproof) that yet before the star  
 Of night arise, thou shalt behold *Virginia*,  
 Thy friend *Virginia*, claim'd, prov'd, and adjudg'd  
 A slave in th' open Forum; a born slave ———  
 Mark me, and by my sentence too, fair *Marcia*.

*Marc.* Thou sprung from Gods! and dost thou  
 claim descent

From *Hercules*, who purg'd the earth of monsters!

*Claud.* *Marcia*, no more —

*Marc.* Away, vile sycophant!

I will not call thee brother!—This base counsel  
 Was thine: 'tis such pernicious flatterers,  
 Such busy, ready, fawning slaves, as thou art,  
 That choak, and stifle truth, poison all virtue,  
 And curse mankind with tyrants, and oppressors!

*Claud.* 'Tis deeply spoke—but whence this sudden  
 change?

For if I err not, who of late, but *Marcia*,  
 'To forward *Appius*' wish!—Whose arts contriv'd  
 To make a breach between two faithful lovers,  
 And to effect it, broke thro' all the ties  
 Of holy friendship?

*Appius.* *Claudius*, peace——perhaps  
 The all-perfect *Marcia* thinks our grosser sense  
 Could ne'er discover lurking at her heart  
 The little wanton God, who sometimes loves  
 To sport with such high virtue!——

*Claud.* Dost thou blush

Degenerate maid?—was this the secret spring  
 Of all thy zeal for *Appius*, all thy cares?  
 For poor *Virginia*, and her threaten'd honor?  
 And now thy hopes are lost, would'st thou assume  
 A virtue which thou know'st not?

*Appius.* Worthy *Marcia*,

(To quit the licence of thy speech) learn this—  
 'Tis vice defeated, baffled, disappointed,  
 That makes such virtuous proselytes as thou art,  
 And fills the world with prating hypocrites!

*Marc.* What shall I say! Alas, what answer make  
 To this deep charge!—forgive me, pitying Heav'n!  
 And oh, ye hapless pair, whom I have injur'd,

Forgive

Forgive me too ! while thus with conscious blushes  
 I own my fault—I own, 'twas treach'rous love,  
 That first seduc'd my wand'ring steps from virtue ;  
 Yet guilty, and unhappy as I am,  
 My soul starts back with horror from a crime  
 Like this—'tis true, while *Appius* meant with honor  
 To wooe *Virginia* for his virtuous bride,  
 I aided, tho' by means not wholly just ;  
 But this is such perdition ! words are wanting  
 To give a name to it !—Oh *Appius* !—*Claudius* !  
 Quit, quit betimes this fatal enterprize,  
 Nor call down thunder on your impious heads !

*Appius*. Away, she dreams—let's leave her—this  
 way, *Claudius*. [*Exeunt Appius and Claudius*.]

*Marc*. All's lost—there is no hope—nothing can  
 shake

The dreadful resolution he has taken——  
 What scenes of blood and rage do I foresee !  
 Misguided, wretched *Marcia* ! with what miscreants  
 Hast thou combin'd !—Now learn how dangerous  
 It is to venture near the verge of baseness :  
 A gen'rous mind should never dare to quit  
 Virtue's firm hold ; that gone, that sacred anchor  
 Once parted from, there is no stop——down drives  
 The desp'rate bark before the foaming torrent,  
 Breaks on a rock, and sinks to rise no more !  
 But oh, that injur'd maid ! that dear *Virginia* !  
 She little thinks what frightful mischiefs wait her !  
 Much less what treach'rous hand has lent its aid,  
 To her undoing !—Quick, let me fly—Ah yet  
 Prevent, if possible, th' uplifted blow !  
 'Tis worse than death !——Yes, thou shalt know my  
 guilt,

In spite of shame thou shalt ; and if there be  
 A way for thee to scape, altho' the passage  
 Lie thro' this heart, I'll pierce it for *Virginia* !

[*Exit Marcia*.]



## SCENE II.

*Icilius's tent in the Roman camp at Algidum.  
First an alarm, then a retreat is sounded. Icil-  
lius enters disorder'd, as from fight.*

*Ici.* Will nothing rid me of my misery!  
Do I in vain provoke the forward foe  
To end me!—Oh *Virginia!*—false *Virginia!*——  
Great Gods, behold me here, a wretch compleat,  
The work of your own hands, in all your wrath!—  
\*Tis death must give me ease—in the still urn  
*Virginia's* perfidy, and all my woes  
Shall sleep: rest then, my heart, nor let a groan  
Escape to tell *Virginus*, his false daughter  
Has ruin'd all thy peace!—She has basely fold  
Her love—for wealth and pride!——

*[walking about disordered.  
surpriz'd.]*

*Virginus* here!

*Enter L. VIRGINIUS.*

*Virg.* Ay, here *Icilius*——  
Now in the name of all the Gods, what means  
This wild despair, that shuns the light? I mark'd thee,  
When to the camp thou cam'st—there on thy visage  
O'erspread with ghastly pale, I saw a grief  
That struck my heart—art thou resolv'd on death?  
Why else rush desp'rate on a thousand swords,  
As ev'n but now thou didst, as if to court it?  
Alas, *Icilius*, little dost thou shew  
Regard for me, and less for poor *Virginia*,  
Whose life, whose very being hangs on thine!

*Ici.* Oh torture!

But yet I must dissemble [*aside*]—Say, *Virginus*,  
Much honor'd. and much lov'd! say, is it strange,  
A *Roman* should forget the thoughts of danger,  
When glory, and his country's wrongs inspire him?

*L. Virg.* This false reserve, *Icilius*, is unworthy  
Both of thyself and me—is our alliance



So hateful, that for refuge thou would'st fly  
 Into the arms of death?—perhaps *Virginia*  
 Too fond, has surfeited thy sickly flame,  
 And now is cheap in thy esteem——if so,  
 I will absolve thee from this odious contract;  
 And duty, and submission to a father  
 Shall teach her, howsoe'er it wring her heart,  
 Without complaint, or aught but silent tears,  
 Unmurm'ring to resign thee!

*Ici.* Down, my heart!

Down, swelling grief! [*aside*]*—**Virginus*, hear me  
 speak——

If e'er my soul, since first she could distinguish  
 Among mankind, wish'd other than to be  
 Join'd in indissoluble bonds to thee,  
 Thy blood, and all thy virtues, may the Gods  
 Abandon me this hour! Then wound me not  
 So deep, to think that aught in thy alliance  
 Is irksome to me—much less, that *Virginia*  
 Has surfeited my love with too much kindness:  
 Ah, no!—Perhaps I may—I know not why——  
 But to myself, methinks, my soul seems heavier  
 Than she was wont to be; and I would rouse me  
 By action—This distemp'rature of mind,  
 This wayward sickness, that has no name,  
 Is one of those conditions human nature  
 Holds her frail tenement by—But it will pass——

*L. Virg.* Words, words; mere words—I see thro'  
 all this veil,

A black corroding grief, that gnaws thy heart;  
 Which since thou'rt obstinate to hide—No more—  
 I've done—This only, then farewell—Whene'er  
 Thy need requires, I tell thee, old *Virginus*  
 Has yet a heart that's firm; a hand to aid thee  
 Against the world combin'd—but have a care!—  
 Take heed, young man!——My friendship and  
 my honor

Must not be trifled with—this touches both—  
 This mean reserve!—By Heav'n's, I know no art,  
 For I have nought to hide!—But in thy breast  
 I find that other maxims rule—There's mystery,

And

And deep disguise, which noble minds disdain ;  
 There's something dark !—and where 'tis dark—'tis  
 foul. *[Exit L. Virgin. angrily.]*

*Ici.* At length he's gone--this was a trying conflict--  
 With rage and grief suppress'd my heart was bursting ;  
 Yet scorn'd complaint — No, should I stoop to 'use  
 A father's pow'r, to gain a forc'd consent,  
 And hug a wretched carcase in my arms,  
 The nobler part, the mind, all over stain'd,  
 Blotted, and scrawl'd with *Appius'* hated image ?  
 Could I bear this ! No—Could the angry Gods  
 Add aught to the full load of woe I bear,  
 It would be thus, thus to possess *Virginia* !

*Enter a GUARD with CAIUS.*

*Guard.* ——— A messenger  
 To *Lucius Icilius* from *Rome* ———

*Caius.* This from *Valerius* to his friend *Icilius*  
 I am commission'd to deliver— *[presenting a letter.]*

*Ici.* *Valerius* ! ha !—what may this message mean ?  
*[aside.]*

*[Reads.]*

*VALERIUS to ICILIUS sends health.*

*These shall inform you, that your presence and aid are  
 here most necessary, in defence of the unhappy Virginia,  
 against the attempts of the enrag'd Appius, who finding  
 all his arts to seduce her, vain, now threatens open vio-  
 lence. The distress'd maid, whose truth and constancy  
 your unjust suspicions have much wrong'd, is prepar'd to  
 give most signal, tho' fatal proofs of both, unless you in-  
 terpose your timely succour.* Farewel.

Heavens, can it be !—I see *Valerius'* hand  
 A witness to its truth—can I have been  
 So fatally deceiv'd !—my heart misgives me !

*Caius.* *Icilius*, pardon me—th' extremity  
 In which I left *Valerius*, and his friends,  
 Demands my utmost haste—I hav't besides  
 In charge to let *Virginus* know, what ruin  
 Waits his most unhappy child.

*Ici.*

*Icil.* Oh, *Caius*!

I know thee now—*Virginus*' faithful freedman—  
Alas, for pity tell me, if thou know'st  
Aught of *Virginia*—what has driv'n the tyrant  
To this precipitate course?

*Caius.* A fresh repulse,  
Which urg'd with too much bitterness, and scorn,  
Has fir'd him ev'n to madness, and he breathes  
Nought but revenge and violence—I saw,  
Ere I departed, at her father's house,  
The hapless maid, all fainting, drown'd in tears;  
With her, *Valerius*, and her uncle *Numitor*,  
*Horatius*, *Plautia*, *Marcia*, *Claudius*' sister,  
Who weeping asks forgiveness, owns some treach'ry  
She has been guilty of, and 'tis from her  
*Appius*' designs are known.

*Ici.* Why then there lives not  
A wretch so curst as I! [*aside*]—Oh *Caius*, haste,  
Lose not a moment—hence!— [*Exit Caius.*

*Virginia*!

Torn with remorse and shame, despair and love,  
I fly, thou dear, thou gen'rous, faithful maid,  
To thy relief—grant me, all gracious Heav'n,  
But one blest hour to wipe my guilt away,  
To pierce the tyrant's heart, and to protect  
My injur'd love—the next decree my fall.'——  
[*Exit Icilus.*

### S C E N E III.

*VIRGINIA's Apartment.*

*VIRGINIA, MARCIA.*

*Marc.* Yet let me call myself thy friend, *Virginia*!  
And shall I faithful add,  
Tho' for a while misled by fatal love,  
That wand'ring and deceitful fire, I stray'd,  
Wide erring from the paths of truth and honour?—  
Yes—let this shame, these tears wash out the stain!—  
Oh,

Oh, might I live to see thee safe from treason,  
 And blest'd with love, my soul could ask no more!  
 But if the fates averse have doom'd, sweet maid,  
 That thou must fall, for glory fall, thy *Marcia*,  
 Once the companion of thy youth, and trust,  
 Tho' now a wretch, shall nobly perish with thee!

*Virg.* *Marcia*, once more belov'd, and faithful  
 too!

I see thee now; I know thee by that virtue  
 I once so lov'd; and brighter now, than ever!  
 The intervening mist, that passion rais'd,  
 Is clear'd away, and all is fair again!

*Marc.* This goodness weighs me down---my heart's  
 too full

To speak---then let me thus pour out my thanks,  
 My grateful tears, in thy forgiving bosom!

*Virg.* Ah, my lov'd *Marcia*, 'tis enough----too  
 much----

I'm satisfy'd---urge then no more a fault  
 Thy hapless passion caus'd---I know too well  
 The tyrant pow'r of love; *Isilius'* charms  
 How irresistible.

*Marc.* Thou hast restor'd me  
 To life and happiness!

*Virg.* From this sweet union  
 My breast derives new hopes; and may the pow'rs  
 That watch o'er innocence look down propitious!  
 But chiefly thou, bright goddess Chastity!  
 Thou to whose honor, ancient *Rome* decreed  
 Temples and altars, when thy own *Lucretia*  
 For glory bled! do thou protect thy votary  
 From violence and shame!

*Enter* PLAUTIA.

———Thy uncle *Numitor*  
 Without expects thee---news of great import  
 Are from the camp but now arriv'd---all *Rome*  
 Is in confusion---what the circumstance,  
 He can deliver---we must now attend him. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E



# A TRAGEDY.

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## SCENE IV.

### A GARDEN.

*Appius.* Wherefore did trifling love's ignoble fire  
Melt this firm breast?—my soul was form'd for em-  
pire.

For war!—to guide the car, to wield the sword!  
Or in the senate teach the stubborn fathers  
My will was law, and my decrees were fate!——  
But now the war, the tumult is within!——  
It rages here!—[*pointing to his breast*]-deserted too  
by *Marcia*?——

Curse on her ill-tim'd fears, and coward virtue!

*Enter RUFUS to him hastily.*

*Ruf. Appius* I come with news to shake all spirits,  
But thine—from different quarters messengers,  
Breathless with heat and speed, are just arriv'd,  
Who tell of the defeat of both our armies;  
On the first onset the perfidious cohorts  
Turn'd back, and fled; not broken by the enemy,  
But resolute beforehand not to conquer,  
Thro' hate and spleen to the Decemvirate,  
Lest aught of happy should befall the state  
Beneath their government.

*Appius.* Malicious Gods!  
From this time I renounce your temples, altars,  
Your false, precarious aid! And on this arm,  
And this firm spirit alone will build my fortune!—  
What, is the fatal news divulg'd?

*Ruf.* 'Tis spread  
Thro' universal *Rome*; the madding populace  
Tumultuous rise; confusion, havock, spoil,  
Are all on foot.

*Appius.* Oh for the bolts of Jove  
To wield amongst them!—Yet this very night,  
Whate'er befall, I swear to sacrifice  
That peevish, scornful maid, that racks me thus,

To

To love and to revenge!

*Ruf.* Surely, my lord,  
'Twere safer to defer the execution  
Of your design, 'till this most dang'rous storm  
Be overblown——

*Appius.* No, by my great progenitor,  
*Alcides*, I will on!—— Like him I'll combat  
This many headed monster, this base *Hydra*,  
The rascal people, to the utmost verge  
Of life and death!

*Ruf.* Howe'er, these dire commotions  
Should instantly be quell'd; we must assuage  
The present heat.

*Appius.* Go thou, and find out *Claudius*;  
Bid him inform my colleagues of this news;  
Let them assemble strait in *Mars's* Temple  
The senate—We must use them now—We want  
Their popular name, and their authority,  
To quell the rabble rout—This done, let *Claudius*  
Repair to me before I meet the senate;  
For I'll not quit, or slack for this impediment,  
The course I have resolv'd—The proud *Virginia*,  
Before another sun gilds these seven hills,  
Shall yet be mine; nor shall the curst *Scilius*  
Escape this arm——Then let to-morrow come;  
And if I fall, I fall with glorious ruin!  
Secure of bliss, whate'er my fortune prove,  
I'll triumph, glutted with revenge and love!

---

## ACT. IV.

*An Apartment in VIRGINIUS's House.*

VIRGINIA, PLAUTIA, MARCIA.

*Virgin.* WHAT dost thou tell me?—My *Scilius*  
come?

*Plaut.* The slaves without have seen him hurrying  
hither

With eager looks and pace—

*Marc.*

*Marc.* Let me retire——  
 I dare not look on him——The wretched *Marcia*  
 Must needs be horror to his eyes——

*Virg.* No, *Marcia*——  
 Thou shalt remain, and he shall know thy services,  
 And all thy gen'rous friendship——

*Enter ICILIUS.*

*Ici.* My *Virginia*!

[*After some pause, as recollecting himself.*]

Alas, forgive me that I call thee so!  
 I had forgot I was a wretch, a criminal,  
 And must not call thee mine!—The sight of thee  
 Had banish'd, for a moment, from my memory,  
 My deep-dy'd guilt, and call'd back former times,  
 And happier scenes, when all was peace and love!  
 Yet hear me! For I ask thee not for pardon!  
 I ask thee not to give me back that love,  
 Which once was all the treasure of this heart!  
 I've squander'd it away, and must not murmur  
 That nothing now is left me but mere misery  
 To fill the aching void!

*Virg.* My vows are heard!

He is return'd, and full of truth and love! [*aside.*]

*Ici.* Turn not away, but hear me! for I swear  
 The dang'rous cloud that's bursting o'er thy head,  
 Once past, with patient grief I will endure  
 Whate'er thy utmost rigor shall impose——

*Virg.* No more—I cannot bear it—Yes, my *Lucius*,  
 I'm thine, for ever thine! My-kindling heart  
 At thy approach, with sympathetic love  
 To meet thee springs, and with thy gen'rous flame  
 Transported longs to mix its faithful fires!

*Ici.* Gods, Gods! this is too much! such sudden  
 blifs

Pouring upon me?—Sure I'm in a dream!  
 Some sweet illusion! that thus mocks my fancy  
 With shadowy scenes of joy!—here let me fall,  
 And breathe my sighs!——[*kneeling.*]

*Virg.* [*raising him*]—how sweet it is to love!——

Methinks

Methinks my bosom feels, as if some treasure  
Long lost, were now by an immediate act  
Of Heav'n's own bounty, to my hopes restor'd!

*Ici.* Is't possible?—Ah, let me preis thee thus  
Against my trembling breast, and hold thee fast!

[*Embracing.*]

Thus folding thee, thus, let thy pitying heart  
Tell mine in nimble beatings, thou forgiv'st me,  
That I am blest, and thou art ever mine! —  
Ha, do my eyes deceive me? — *Marcia* here!

*Virg.* If thy *Virginia*'s love indeed be precious  
In *Lucius*' eyes; next to the gracious gods,  
Behold the gen'rous friend, [*pointing to Marcia.*] to  
whom perhaps

Thou ow'st, that yet she lives; that without shame  
She dares look up, and fondly gaze upon thee!  
Thou dear, kind maid! [*embracing Marcia*] without  
whose timely succour

The lost *Virginia* had perhaps this moment  
Been a despis'd, dishonor'd, wretched slave —  
Oh, *Lucius*! —

*Marcia.* Cease, *Virginia*, to oppress  
His gen'rous mind — Thou know'st th' unhappy  
*Marcia*

Has less deserv'd his pardon than his scorn.

*Ici.* No more, fair *Marcia*,—let nought inauspicious,  
Let no unkind remembrance now pollute  
This perfect bliss—Hast thou not sav'd *Virginia*?  
And can I e'er repay the mighty debt?  
I do believe thy soul is virtuous, noble,  
Tho', for a while, thy guardian genius slumber'd,  
Neglectful of his charge —

[*starting, as recollecting himself.*]

— But yet, my heart,

Thou must not know repose! —

*Virg.* What means my *Lucius*?

There's something lab'ring in thy breast —

*Ici.* Thou dear,

Lov'd maid! — My soul, long toss'd in troubles,  
Amidst these transports, for a while suspended  
Her racking cares, and catch'd at hope too soon —

*Virg.*



*Virg.* Oh, ease my throbbing bosom !

*Ici.* My *Virginia*,

The jewel I had lost, I have recover'd ! —  
But Oh, not yet secur'd ! — For know to render  
All opposition to his desp'rate purpose  
Hopeless, and vain, the Tyrant has assembled  
His crew of ruffians from all parts — the levies  
New rais'd, are just arriv'd in dreadful throngs,  
And awe the trembling city — No assistance,  
No human aid can now defend thy innocence !  
Nothing but flight !

*Vir.* Ye guardian Pow'rs protect me !

Where shall I fly ? —

*Ici.* Compose thy troubled breast —

All may be well — With a fond lover's care  
I would attend thy steps, and guard my treasure  
From ev'ry ill ! — but oh, imperious honor  
Forbids me now to leave my wretched country,  
A prey to faction, tyranny, and rapine,  
That reign within these walls ; while the proud foe,  
With fire and sword, advancing to our gates,  
Threatens to lay imperial *Rome* in dust ! —  
Thy uncle *Numitor* will be the guide,  
And partner of thy flight — he will conduct thee  
To *Ardea*, where the good *Herminius*, bound  
By ties of blood, and ancient friendship dwells ;  
His sacred hearth, and hospitable Gods  
Are ready to receive thee.

*Vir.* Ah, my *Lucius* !

How transient was the momentary joy,  
That swell'd my eager hopes ! — Methinks I feel  
A shivering, like th' approach of death !  
Sure some presage.

*Ici.* Thou dearest maid, have comfort !

Are there not Gods above ? — When virtue suffers,  
'Tis their own cause ! — But let us haste — the Senate  
Is now assembling — Let us seize the occasion,  
(While *Claudius*, and the fierce Decemvir meet them)  
To lead thee hence ; — when once th' impending storm,  
That's gathering o'er our heads, be overblown,  
Thou quickly shalt return to bless these eyes :

Then

Then settled calms, and gentle peace shall sooth  
 Each anxious care—Auspicious love shall prune  
 His ruffled wings, and point each shaft with gold !  
 And sacred *Hymen* light his nuptial torch,  
 To guide us on our way to endless bliss !

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II.

*A street in Rome.*

APPIUS, RUFUS, CLAUDIUS.

*Ap.*  *Icilius* now in *Rome* ?

*Ruf.* By your command  
 Watching in yon retreat, I saw him enter  
*Virginus'* gates.

*Ap.* Confusion !—We're discover'd—  
 There's some design on foot,—is thy band ready ?  
 (*To Claudius.*

*Claud.* They're all prepar'd.

*Ap.* Ha, *Claudius* !—look, look yonder !—  
 They're coming forth this instant—*Marcia* too !—  
 'Tis she, who has betray'd us---There they go !  
 See, *Numitor* conducts my lovely prize !—  
 By Heav'ns ! *Icilius* quits her, and returns !—  
 Fortune, I thank thee !—*Claudius*, now advance  
 With all thy force, and meet them in the front  
 That way—On my tribunal thou shalt find me.

[*Exeunt Claudius and Rufus.*

*Ap.* Now my propitious stars shine out ! Now speed  
 My glorious hopes, that I may taste the sweets  
 That wait on Empire !—Let the vulgar herd  
 By slow pursuits of art, and patient labor  
 Attain their ends ; but let me, like a God  
 At once stretch out my arm, and seize my joy.

(*Exit Appius.*

SCENE

# VIRGINIA.

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## SCENE III.

*The gate Collina, in Rome.*

*While a march is playing, L. VIRGINIUS enters with a band of soldiers.*

*L. Vir.* At length, my valiant friends, and fellow soldiers,

We tread the parent soil, where first we drew  
Our breath——This is no time for studied forms  
Of speech——With hurry'd march, and wounds un-  
heal'd

We've left our camp, and here are come, to conquer,  
Or dye!—there is no mean! our hard oppressor  
Already victor o'er our laws, our liberties,  
Our fortunes, and our lives, is not content,  
Unless he may extend his wide dominion,  
Over our honors too!—Our maids, our matrons  
Must glut his impious lust;—Force must compel,  
Where treason can't seduce—My child *Virginia*,  
My age's darling, whom my choice, and word,  
Had long since destin'd to the brave *Icilius*,  
Your Tribune, must be forc'd from my embrace  
To a loath'd purpose!—Will ye bear it, Romans?  
Say, shall your old Centurion, bent with years,  
And cumb'rous arms, who on his breast yet bears  
The mark of many a wound in battle shar'd  
With you, my brave companions, now at last,  
Be stabb'd with such a sight? a helpless daughter  
In vain imploring aid, dragg'd to pollution!  
No, in each eye, I read your noble purpose  
To die, or free your sinking, bleeding country  
From this pernicious tyrant——

C

*Enter*

*Enter MARCIA to L. VIRGINIUS, hastily—*

*Mar.*

Ah, *Virginus!*

*L. Vir.* *Marcia*, what mean these wild, and frighted looks

This breathless haste?

*Mar.*

*Virginia*, oh *Virginia!*—

My treach'rous brother!—

*L. Vir.*

Ha, *Virginia* said'st thou?

*Claudius?*—*Virginia?*—Ye avenging Gods!—

Why join'st thou thus their names?—Speak, thou dear maid!

Tho' thy perfidious brother be a traitor,  
Thy faithful, gen'rous breast holds no alliance  
With his black crimes!

*Mar.*

Yes, thou brave son of Rome!

I am a wretch!—I've wrong'd thee, basely wrong'd thee!

The tale's too long to tell, but I've betray'd  
My friend, my trust, nor dare I to prophane  
The sacred name of faithful!—But I'll dye,  
Or purge my guilt away.

*L. Vir.* [*hastily.*] Where is my Daughter?

*Mar.* Torn from my arms!—She's lost!—She's gone!—A slave!

*L. Vir.* A slave—What mean'st thou?—Death and madness!—Speak—

Where is she?

*Mar.* Ah, where now she is, I know not—

But some few minutes since, my impious brother,  
Attended by a band of ruffians, seiz'd her,  
As we were coming forth, and dragging her,  
Spite of the gathering crowd, to the tribunal  
Of the Decemvir, claim'd her for his slave.

*L. Vir.* My friends, my fellow citizens, my countrymen!

Say, shall a Roman suffer wrongs like these?

*Mar.* Then started forth a train of perjur'd miscreants,  
With ready witness to support th' imposture;

And



# VIRGINIA.

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And the fierce judge, without remorse, or shame,  
At once pronounc'd her doom——*Icilius* then  
Rush'd in between——A desp'rate tumult rose;  
Daggers were drawn; a mingled cry was heard;  
Blood stream'd on ev'ry side; the women fled,  
Loud shrieking——Soon the torrent bore away  
*Virginia* from my side——'Midst the confusion  
Your name and your arrival were proclaim'd.  
That instant, spurr'd by friendship, grief and duty,  
I flew to find you out, and to relate  
The horrid tale!——Farewel!——These swelling eyes  
Shall ne'er be clos'd asleep, 'till I have found  
Where my perfidious brother has conceal'd  
The injur'd maid!—— [Exit *Marcia*.]

*L. Vir.*

Oh miserable Rome!

To sure destruction doom'd! Oh *Mars*, *Quirinus*!  
Our tutelar Gods! Where slept your watchful care,  
When, in an evil hour, your blinded sons,  
Misjudging, trusted to the grasp of tyranny  
Their precious birthright, freedom! Nay, held out  
Their hands for bonds!——Away, my friends, away!  
Arm'd as we are, let's rush into the Forum,  
And instantly assault our curst oppressor!  
Let us not drag our shames a moment longer:  
Let us not think we live, till we are free:  
Away, to conquer, or to dye!

[Going.]

## S C E N E IV.

*Enter ICILIUS*

*Vir.* A moment hold——Where dost thou run?

*L. Vir. Icilius,*

My son?——Where is *Virginia*?——Ha, speak——  
Where?

Where hast thou left my child?——Distraction,  
death!

Without her? — Could not love and glory teach thee  
To've seen her piece-meal torn before thine eyes,  
And afterwards to've dragg'd her quiv'ring limbs  
To greet her father, rather than have left her  
A prey to tyranny and lust? —

*Ici.* *Virginus,*

But stay and hear me —

*L. Vir.* Too, too long I've stay'd!  
My lov'd *Virginia*, had thy wretched father  
Been near thee, never hadst thou known this shame!

*Ici.* Thou could'st have done no more —

*L. Vir.* Away, away! —

*Ici.* Why this is madness, rage — *[impatiently.]*

*L. Vir.* *[Surveying him.]* I see thee living —  
You see not her — *[raising his voice.]*

*Ici.* *Virginus,* if th' impatience  
Of thy just grief, had left me pause for speech,  
Ere this I had inform'd thee, that thy daughter  
Lives yet unhurt, her freedom, and her honor  
Safe and inviolate —

*L. Vir.* Thank the blest Gods!  
Still may she be their care! — But yet, *Idius* —  
Safe, and inviolable? — Why then not with thee!

*Ici.* Know then, this is the cause: When I oppos'd  
*Appius'* unrighteous judgment, which decreed  
*Virginia* to the custody of *Claudius*,  
Till thy return —

*L. Vir.* What, has not the Decemvir  
Adjudg'd her *Claudius'* slave?

*Ici.* With patience hear me —  
He would, by absolute, and final sentence,  
Without repeal, have doom'd her *Claudius'* slave,  
Had not the venerable *Numitor*  
Stood forth and with an eloquence, which grief,  
Such grief alone could minister, expos'd  
The cruelty, and the iniquity  
Of such a shameless sentence, to deprive

A father, and a Roman, of his child,  
Unheard——The murm'ring throng was fir'd, and

*Appius*

Compell'd to respite his unjust decree  
'Till thy return —— But mark the base condition !  
E'en that the lovely maid should be consign'd  
To the false charge of the pernicious *Claudius*,  
Till her reputed father should appear  
T' assert his right.

*L. Vir.*

Perfidious, treach'rous villain !  
So should my innocent child in that dark interval  
Have suffer'd wrongs beyond all cure !

*Ici.*

My blood

No more could brook restraint—I rush'd on *Claudius*,  
And tore her from his hold ; the pitying crowd  
Took part in my distress, and soon beat off  
The liſtors : strait the ribald crew of *Appius*  
Fell on ; a bloody fray ensu'd, and all  
Was going to wreck ; when 'midst the throng ap-  
pear'd

*Horatius* and *Valerius* ; both belov'd,  
Both favour'd of the people——They at length  
So far prevail'd, that the Decemvir granted,  
Pretending care for peace, and publick weal,  
(Tho' inly stung to madness) that *Virginia*  
Should rest with *Numitor* till thy return,  
And final issue of the cause : to him  
I then resign'd my precious charge ; thro' crowds  
Of shouting Romans, he conducted her  
In safety home. It now remains with thee,  
To think in this distressful exigence  
What curse is best.

*L. Vir.*

What best ?—Oh righteous Gods !  
Was it for this, ye gave me this dear child ?  
Was it for this, my early care nurs'd up  
Her blooming youth, and in that gracious form  
Infus'd a noble, and ingenuous spirit,  
To have it now disputed, after all,  
If she be mine or not ?—If she shall live,  
As she was bred, in freedom, and in honor,

The virtuous daughter of a Roman citizen,  
 Or sunk in everlasting infamy,  
 The slave, and harlot of a villain?—Ah! ———  
 That thought is death!—I'll not endure it longer!  
 I'll know the worst—This torturing suspense  
 Is insupportable!—

*Ici.* What would'st thou do?  
 By force redress thy wrongs, and hazard all  
 Upon one desp'rate cast?—Be more advis'd,  
 And wait till—

*L. Vir.* Wait? When ev'ry hour's delay  
 Cries out dishonor on me?—No, by Heav'ns,  
 The shameful cause shall be decided!  
 Another sun shall never more behold  
*Virginus* crouching, and deprest with fear  
 Of being father to a strumpet!

*Ici.* Gods!  
 Wilt thou rush headlong to destruction? Aid  
 The tyrant's foul design, and wait thy doom  
 From this corrupt tribunal?—This base claim  
 Of *Claudius*, and his prosecuted right,  
 Thou know'st is mere delusion, a vile mockery  
 Of justice; and wilt thou—

*L. Vir.* No more, *Scilius*—  
 But be persuaded that *Virginus* knows,  
 The duty of a father, and a Roman.

*Ici.* Think on the tyrant's strength—  
 What counterpoise  
 Canst thou oppose to such unequal weight,  
 What valor 'gainst such odds?—'Tis sure perdition!  
 And must I see, with patient eyes, my love,  
 My hopes all sacrific'd?—

*L. Vir.* I pray thee leave me—  
 My breast is all confusion—If my grief,  
 Our ancient friendship, or my pray'r can touch thee,  
 Be this the proof—Awhile avoid *Virginus*;  
 Forget the ties of love, and all th' engagements  
 Of plighted faith—Till this base cause is ended,  
 I dare not call her mine, nor can I give,  
 Or thou receive the doubtful gift with honor.

Now,



Now, my try'd warriors, if your old Centurion,  
 Whene'er he led you forth to arms and glory,  
 Sustain'd the shock of battle with the foremost,  
 And, drop for drop, pour'd out his blood with  
 yours,

Now comes the time to claim your love, your aid ;  
 To you, and to the Gods, I trust my doom,  
 And stand or fall, with liberty, and Rome.

## ACT V. SCENE I.

*An Apartment in L. VIRGINIUS's House.*

*L. Vir.* **T**HE time draws near ; the fate comes  
 hast'ning on—

*Virginia's* fate and mine—I must compose  
 This tempest here, and settle all within  
 To meet whate'er may fall—Distracting doubts,  
 Be still ! Ye horrid shapes of fear, avaunt !——  
 Alas, in vain !—My lab'ring soul can find  
 No rest—Where'er she turns, terror starts up  
 To thwart her way—Oh, my belov'd *Virginia* !  
 Should'st thou be torn from me !—Let me not think  
 on't !

Alas, she comes this way !—I must not see her—  
 She melts me so !—I cannot— [turning away.

*Enter VIRGINIA.*

*Vir.* Sir, my father !  
 Turn not away,——what have I done ?——

*L. Vir.* *Virginia,*  
 Why dost thou come to waken with thy presence  
 Those tender thoughts, those soft remembrances,  
 That war upon my firmness ?—Fly, my child,

Fly from a wretched parent, whom the wrath  
Of fate pursues——perhaps I must forget  
I ever was a father!

*Vir.* Oh my heart!

Do you forsake me too! Ah whither, whither,  
Wilt thou betake thee now, undone *Virginia*,  
When ev'n a father's arms are shut against thee!  
Oh, Sir! (since now the tender name, my infancy  
First learn'd to lisp, must ever be forgot)  
What should I think?—Am I indeed not yours?  
Or do you scorn to acknowledge me your daughter,  
Stain'd as I am, and branded for a slave?

*L. Vir.* My tears will choak me! [*aside*] Go, retire,  
my daughter——

Thou art my own! my dearest, tenderest child!  
I glory that thou art!——Go in awhile——  
Let me collect myself——The sight of thee  
Disarms me of all strength, all pow'r, and shakes  
My firmest resolutions!

*Vir.* Must I go,  
Thus doubtful of my fate, thus driven from you?  
Behold the poor *Virginia* at your feet! [*kneeling.*]  
Behold these falling tears!——whatever be  
The purpose of your soul (it must be noble,  
Since 'tis my father's) oh, unfold it all!  
I will not shrink, but meet it as becomes  
A Roman Maid, and Daughter to *Virginus*!

*L. Vir.* She cleaves my heart! [*aside*] Repose thyself  
awhile ——

Within few moments I return——Mean time  
Avoid  *Icilius*——let not heedless passion  
Thwart my command, but as thou lov'st, Obey.

[*Exit L. VIRGINIUS.*]

*Vir.* What can this mean? — My father's strict  
command

T'avoid *Icilius*——The strange war of passions  
Conflicting in his breast, his broken Voice,  
His starts, his eager looks, all, all declare,  
Some dread event is near!

*Enter*

Enter ICILIUS.

Alas, *Virginia*!—

We're lost—thy cruel father's savage honor  
Is hurrying to destroy us! but ev'n now  
I met him going forth, and would have spoke—  
When frowning stern—forbear, he cry'd, *Scilius*,  
To thwart me thus, and fiercely past along.  
I know his fatal purpose—oh *Virginia*!  
Urg'd by the Furies, he is gone to claim  
Immediate Judgment, and provoke a sentence  
That will undo us all—

*Vir.* Farewel, farewel! [*weeping.*]

*Ici.* And wilt thou leave me thus to my despair?  
Can thy own heart consent t' abandon me?  
Or is *Scilius* such a stranger there,  
That thou can'st banish his remembrance from thee  
Without a pang? nay, ev'n with cold indifference?

*Vir.* Alas, too well thou know'st this heart, *Scilius*,  
To think that ever cold indifference  
Can harbour there—my duty, not my wishes,  
Commands me hence; his will which ever was,  
And ever must be sacred to *Virginia*.

*Ici.* 'Tis well—thy duty bids thee tear this heart,  
And thou obey'st—how pow'rful is thy duty!  
But oh, *Virginia*, oh how weak thy love.

*Vir.* Cruel *Scilius*?

*Ici.* Yet I swear to heav'n,  
I will not leave thee till this day be past,  
Tho' men and gods oppose—Thou art my own—  
I will defend thee, and my rights in thee,  
While I have life, nor trust to other aid:  
Where'er thou goest, I will pursue thy steps,  
And join my fate with thine.

*Vir.*Away, *Icilius*!—

It seems, thou know'st me not—Hast thou forgot,  
I am *Virginus*' daughter?—Would'st thou cancel  
The bond of my obedience?—Learn to render  
Thy passion worthier of thyself and me!  
Learn to respect my duty, and my glory;  
For tho' I love, yet still I am a Roman!

*Ici.* Farewel to all my hopes!—*Virginia's* heart,  
Which once I fondly thought my own, it seems,  
Is Roman all! and in the blaze of glory,  
Love's weaker flame is lost!

Enter *PLAUTIA* and *MARCIA*.*Plau.*

My child! thy father  
Impatient of his wrongs, this moment waits  
To lead thee to the judgment seat of *Appius*!  
Our streets are throng'd—Rome pours her numbers  
forth,

All anxious for thy fate—My heart is broke  
With tenderness, and sorrow!

*Mar.*

Thou dear maid,  
Whom I have injur'd! see, the wretched *Marcia*,  
Sinking with guilt, and grief, and shame, is come  
To follow thy sad steps, and loud, proclaim  
To heav'n and earth, ev'n in the face of *Appius*,  
And her false brother, the detested perfidy,  
They have contriv'd against thee!

*Vir.*

My kind *Marcia*,  
All will be well—Methinks my soul seems arm'd  
With heav'n-imparted strength; and lighter grown  
Than usual, is beginning to shake off  
These earthy bands that hold her—Now, my *Lucius*,  
Once more farewel—forgive the few harsh words,  
Which while my tongue pronounc'd, my heart dis-  
claim'd;

For oh, that I have ever fondly lov'd thee,  
And ever will, till the last pulse of life

Shall



Shall cease to beat within this constant heart,—  
Let this embrace, and this! [*embracing*] perhaps the  
last,

That e'er shall bind thee to *Virginia's* breast,  
Bear witness!

*Ici.* Oh my soul!—here let me grow! [*embracing.*  
And twist my vital thread with thine so fast,  
'The envious fates shall be oblig'd to close  
Th' inexorable sheers on both at once!

*Vir.*  *Icilius*, I must leave thee!

*Ici.* May the Gods  
Abandon me, if aught shall now divide us!  
No, since this desp'rate course is fix'd, *Virginia*,  
Myself will guide thee to this base tribunal,  
Where rob'd iniquity sits high enthron'd,  
To tread on innocence!—Now, ye just Pow'rs,  
Whom we adore, exert your dreaded influence!  
Now strike on virtue's side! confound the guilty,  
Succour th' oppress'd, and show that ye are Gods!

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE II. *and last.*

APPIUS' Tribunal in the Forum.  
*A numerous train of Liectors, Guards, &c.*

APPIUS, CLAUDIUS.  
*They come forward to the front of the stage.*

*Ap.* Is all prepar'd?

*Clau.* Nothing is wanting—Guards  
Are plac'd in ev'ry quarter—Three strong Cohorts  
Possess the Forum, and forbid access  
To all but friends—*Virginus'* followers,  
A desp'rate, raging band, just hot from war,  
We unawares surpris'd; secur'd, disarm'd them;  
Not without blood——

*Ap.* That's well, my trusty *Claudius*,  
By Heav'n that's well!—but how hast thou dispos'd  
Thy sister *Marcia*?—Ha!—she may be dangerous;  
She knows too much, and is too keen a foe.

*Clau.*

*Clau.* *Rufus* has my command, if she approach,  
To seize, and instantly convey her home ;  
He likewise has't in charge to apprehend  
 *Icilius*, as a rebel, and to bear him  
Without delay to prison.

*Ap.* 'Tis enough——  
I'm satisfied—and yet methinks—Ah, *Claudius* !  
There's something heavy here, that weighs me down—  
I know not what——

*Clau.* There's no retreating now——  
The die is thrown——

*Ap.* I hear 'em coming—Now,  
My genius ! Now, be mighty, and support me !  
[*Appius ascends the Tribunal.*]

*APPIUS, seated on his Tribunal. CLAUDIUS below.*

*L. VIRGINIUS enters, leading by the hand his daughter VIRGINIA. PLAUTIA, with a train of weeping matrons following.*

*Lictors, Guards, &c. close up each side of the stage, leaving only the front open.*

*Ap.* Romans, you see me from this awful seat  
A second time constrain'd to render judgment,  
In a determin'd cause ; our laws, 'tis true,  
Our rights, our customs, all cry out aloud  
Against such violation ; but, alas !  
So the necessity of these bad times  
Demands ; for bold sedition stalks abroad  
With such gigantic strides, that Justice' self  
Is forc'd to quit her path !—I'll not repeat  
The high indignities, the outrages,  
The insults offer'd to the sov'reign magistrate ;  
No, Romans ; let my wrongs forgotten die——  
It is not for revenge, but law, I stand ;  
The sacred tables, and the even course  
Of steady justice—This is *Appius'* aim—

Romans,

Romans, I've done—Let either side stand forth—  
I rest in equal poise to weigh the right.

*Clau.* Then let my right prevail—My proofs thou  
know'st—

This ancient slave—A witness to the birth  
Of that young maid, in my own house—My freed-  
man

*Davus*—who, with the mother's privity  
Sold her to childless *Numitoria*,

*Virginus*' wife—

*Ap.* These proofs, so long conceal'd,  
Why now produc'd ?

*Clau.* Does *Appius* ask the cause ?  
Does he ?—'Tis well—thou shalt be satisfy'd ;  
But then complain not after, when thou hear'st  
Ungrateful truths—

*Ap.* What mean these obscure hints,  
These dark surmises ?—Speak—I dare thy worst.

*Clau.* Know then, it is for thee I prosecute  
This odious, this unpopular claim—For thee  
Am loaded with the bitter hate, and rage  
Of all the Commons.

*Ap.* Traitor !—How ?—for me ?—

*Clau.* For thee—Thy despicable, inauspicious love  
For this young maid, known to all Rome—(Nay,  
frown not—)

Threaten'd an union, which the sacred tables  
Have doom'd accurs'd—My freedman, struck with  
horror,

To think a slave should stain the Appian race,  
Disclos'd his guilt, till then conceal'd from me ;  
I urge my right, to snatch thee from destruction.

*Ap.* I'm not to learn, that boldest censure lives  
In basest mouths—The herd will still affect  
To know, and reason deep !—But could'st thou think  
I meant to blot my name with such perdition ?

*Clau.* Forgive my fears, if they have done thee wrong ;  
Thy glory was the cause ; therefore unmov'd

I wait

I wait thy final sentence, if *Virginus*  
Have aught t' object, now let him urge it home.

*L. Vir.* Thou traitor !—I have hitherto been silent,  
And patiently have heard that impious tongue  
Wrong Heav'n and earth !—only that I might learn  
The full extent of this abhorr'd contrivance ;  
Glaring, as is the day, to ev'ry eye !  
But oh, thou pander slave !—think'st thou, *Virginus*  
Will deign an answer to the perjurd tale ?  
Disprove those caitiffs, whom thou hast produc'd,  
And wait a sentence from that faithless judge,  
Who leagu'd with thee—

*Ap.* *Virginus*, such intemp'rance  
Bespeaks a doubtful cause—Were I indeed  
The tyrant thou pretend'st, what hinders me,  
But that this moment, seizing the advantage  
Thy insolence and outrage gives, I might  
Proceed to instant judgment, and stand justify'd  
To envy's self ?—Think then, and be advis'd,  
While yet 'tis time—If thou hast aught to offer,  
That can avail thee, or invalidate  
Th' accuser's claim, speak free, thou shalt be heard  
With favor ; nay, by Heav'ns, myself will joy  
To see this innocent, hapless, virtuous maid,  
Whom I admire, and pity, sav'd from ruin.

*L. Vir.* Oh, *Jove*, the thunderer !—This temperate  
villain !  
How calm, how cool he meditates oppression !  
With what serenity he gives the stab !  
Thou tyrant, who, if Justice had her course,  
Trembling and pale, ought'st now to stand before  
The terrible tribunal of the people,  
To give account of all thy crimes !—Think'st thou  
There is that peasant slave, who could be gull'd  
By such apparent fraud !—Behold the Forum  
Block'd up with troops !—My friends, by base sur-  
prize  
O'erpower'd, in chains !—Ev'n now, a band of  
ruffians  
Burst forth, and seiz'd *Scilius*—Nay, with violence,  
The



The gen'rous *Marcia* (ah, too nobly good,  
 To be allied to a perfidious brother!)  
 They seiz'd, they dragg'd along the streets of Rome!  
 Because she could unfold thee, lay thee open,  
 With all the foul corruption of thy heart,  
 To public view!—Thou seest I know thee, *Appius*;  
 Spare then all farther feigning—Thou'st play'd o'er  
 Thy part assign'd; now be thyself again,  
 Th'oppressive, bloody, bold, rapacious tyrant!  
 And snatch by open force!

*Ap.* Thou insolent,  
 Audacious rebel! Think'st thou to patch up  
 Thy rotten plea, by ribaldry and railing?  
 Or with thy clam'rous cries, extort thro' fear,  
 What right denies thee?—No, thy venom'd rage  
 Shall burst thee, ere I shrink?—*Claudius*, thou hast,  
 By fair, and open proof; by living witness,  
 Supported well thy claim; which this foul railer  
 Refuses to reply to, but by slander:  
 Take then thy own; for this is my award;  
 Which, by the Gods, and the offended majesty  
 Of Justice, unrevok'd shall stand—So, hence,  
 And take her with thee.

*Clau.* I thank thee, *Appius*—Come—we must  
 retire—— [Laying hold of Virginia.]

*Vir.* Off!—Touch me not!—insidious, treach'rous  
 monster!

[She struggling, Claudius endeavours to force her away.  
 Oh, Gods!—help, help!—my father! Romans!  
 help!

Save me!

*Clau.* In vain thou struggl'st—Thou must hence  
 With me—and shalt—Thou art my slave, young  
 maid;

Know thy condition; and henceforward learn  
 Obedience to my pleasure——

*Vir.* Triumph o'er  
 A lifeless corpse thou may'st, and these torn limbs,  
 Stiff'ning in death, trail after thee—but never,

No,

No, never think, while sense, and vital heat  
Inform this earthly mass, to part me from  
The stock, where first I grew ! [*clinging to her father.*]

*L. Vir.*

No more, my daughter—

Thou see'st resistance is in vain—We must  
Fulfil our destiny : there is no help :  
Submit thee then, and arm'd with patience, suit  
Thy mind to thy hard fortune.

*Vir.*

Righteous Heaven !

What, does my father give me up ?—Does he  
Confirm the cruel sentence pass'd upon me ?—  
Behold me then a slave !—Here, thou remorseless,  
Thou perjur'd minister !—Here—bind these limbs  
In servile fetters ! Manacle these hands !  
This wretched frame shall not be subject long  
To thy inhuman power !—Come then—drag me  
To dungeons, death and darkness—

*L. Vir.*

Hold, *Virginia*—

*Appius*, thou see'st I yield, nor dare I longer  
Contend against the sov'reign pow'r ; the law,  
That robs me of my daughter, tho' severe,  
I do submit to ; and I pray forgive  
A wretched father, if my unweigh'd speech  
Have been too bitter : now, before I go  
For ever to lose sight of this poor maid,  
Whom certainly I always thought my own,  
And as my own have lov'd, and bred, and cherish'd ;  
If thou hast pity, grant this one request,  
The privilege but of a few sad moments,  
To breath out all the anguish of my soul,  
And glut myself with grief—'Twill be some ease,  
Before we part, to take a last farewell,  
To fold her in my trembling arms once more,  
And rain my bitter tears into her bosom,  
Ere I resign her !

*Ap.*

Be it so—but let

A guard, for more security, attend.

*L. Vir.* 'Tis well—I thank ye—This way, *Virginia*—

*Vir.*

*Vir.* My beating heart ! [*following.*

*L. Vir.* Support me, Gods ! [*aside.*—

[*L. Virginius, and his daughter come forward on the stage.*

*L. Vir.*

My child !

Ah, my belov'd *Virginia* !

*Vir.*

My dear father !

*L. Vir.* I cannot utter it !—When I would speak,  
My heart-strings tremble, and affrighted nature  
Backward recoils !—My child !—must it then be ?  
Must I forget all feelings of a father,  
And of a man ?—Must I blot out all traces  
From this distracted brain, of what I have been ?  
How I have lov'd, how train'd up thee, sweet maid,  
Now for pollution mark'd ?—Oh, bloody *Appius* !—  
Gods, Gods !—if ye are just !—Draw nearer to me—  
[*to Virginia.*

I let me weep over thee awhile—and then——  
Can'st thou not guess !—Oh say, and spare my tongue  
The dreadful word !—Can'st thou read the purpose  
That shakes me thus ?

*Vir.*

What may this mean ?

*L. Vir.*

See'st thou

This mortal point ?—— [*pulling out the dagger.*

*Vir.*

'Tis as my boding heart

Prefag'd—here then my cares and dangers end. [*aside.*

My father, tho' my sex, and years, till now  
Unvers'd in sorrow, start to look on death ;  
Tho' nature struggles hard, and fain would ward  
The fatal blow, that cuts off all my hopes ;  
Yet my soul feels, and owns the deed is noble,  
And worthy of my father !

*L. Vir.* 'Tis cruel, but yet glorious !—Thou must  
die,

To save thee from perdition !—Think, oh think,  
What 'tis to live a slave ! the butt, and mark  
Of hourly shame, and insult !—think upon  
Thy youth, thy innocence, and maiden bloom,

Stain'd

Stain'd and defac'd by barb'rous lust, and outrage !  
 Think when the brutal tyrant shall be cloy'd,  
 To have thy rifled beauties then consign'd  
 To th' next gross ruffian, and the next—Distraction !

*Vir.* Quick, quick, dispatch——  
 Tear up my bosom with thy steel, but spare  
 To rend my soul with sounds like these—Oh strike !—

*L. Vir.* Thus then—[*lifting the dagger*]—my hand  
 shrinks back, and ev'ry nerve  
 Stiffens with horror !—turn aside, my eyes,  
 Nor view the bloody deed !—

*Vir.* No more, my father——  
 Oh Gods !—We are observ'd —They'll tear me from  
 thee !

Here strike !—Oh let me aid thy trembling hand !  
 A moment lost consigns me o'er to shame !

*L. Vir.* Just Gods !—[*looking up to Heaven.*] thus  
 then—and thus—— [stabbing her.

The only way I can, I set thee free !

*Ap.* What has he done ! [starting up on his Tribunal.  
*Plau.* Oh horrid, cruel, father !

She sinks !—She dies !—Help !— [runs to support her.

*L. Vir.* [Holding up the dagger to Appius.] Appius,  
 with this blood

Thee, and thy impious head, I thus devote  
 To the infernal Gods ! [Exit, holding up the dagger.

*Ap.* Perdition seize me  
 But he has murder'd her !—Attach him, Lictors,  
 And bear him instantly—What noise is that ?

[A tumultuous noise is heard without.

*Enter RUFUS to APPIUS, hastily.*

*Ru.* My Lord,  *Icilius* rescu'd, by the populace,  
 Is coming at their head ; the guards on post  
 They have broke through, and bear down all before  
 them.

*Ap.*



*Ap.* Confusion!—I'm betray'd!—The slaves have fold me!

*Cla.* Let us escape, before it be too late—  
We must give way to th' torrent—

*Ap.* No, this arm  
Shall stem it—And the troops that fled, shall conquer,  
When *Appius* leads 'em on—Away!—[*to Claudius.*  
*Appius descends in haste from his Tribunal and goes out with Claudius.*]

*Enter MARCIA, with a train of weeping matrons.*

*Mar.* [*seeing Virginia's body.*] Oh!  
Support me!—here!—here is a sight!—turn here,  
And stiffen into stone!—See that sweet bosom,  
All gor'd, and bloody, heaving yet in death!  
Look on her quiv'ring lips, and that dead pale,  
That creeps o'er all her bloom!  
[*A loud shouting is heard.*]

*Then enters ICILIUS at the head of the people.*

*Ici.* [*Seeing the body, he is struck with horror, and stands fix'd in astonishment for some time—at last he kneels down by her—*]

*My Virginia!—*

[*Virginia at the sound of his voice, endeavours to raise herself—She looks at him for some time, unable to speak—then sinks down, and with a groan expires.—*]

*Ici.* [*starting up from the ground.*] Oh, blast these eyes,

Some speedy fire from Heav'n!—dry up all sight!  
Left looking here, I strike against the Gods,  
That doom'd me such a wretch!—Gone, gone for ever!—

It is not to be borne!—the only way

Is thus!—

[*going to stab himself.*

*Enter*

*Enter L. VIRGINIUS, who catches his arm.*

*L. Vir.* What means thy rage?—Look here!—his  
impious blood  
Smokes on my dagger's point!

*[holding up the bloody dagger.]*

*Ici.* *[struggling.]* Unhand me, murd'rer!—  
Thou butcher of thy child!—there, parricide!  
Behold thy triumph there!—

*[pointing to Virginia's body.]*

*L. Vir.* *[weeping.]* My old heart splits with sorrow!—  
Sweet, hapless flow'r!  
Untimely cropt by the fell planter's hand!  
My eyes weep blood to look on what I've done—  
And yet 'twas pity nerv'd my arm to strike  
The blow!

*Ici.* Distraction seize thee!—then strike here!—  
Give me thy pity too!

*L. Vir.* *Icilius*, hear me—  
Look on the cold remains of that dear maid—  
She sleeps in peace and honor!—wouldst thou rather  
Behold her thus, or stain'd with foul pollution?  
—Now, as thou art a Roman,

Declare—

*Ici.* Away!—I wish to die, *Virginus*—

*L. Vir.* To die?—Are Rome, and glory then forgot?  
At sight of this hot knife, smoking with blood,  
All Rome was fir'd, and aided my old arm  
To reach the tyrant's heart!—And shall we now  
Give up these glorious hopes?—The Roman name  
Again shall rise! Again fair Liberty  
Smile o'er th'afflicted land!—For such a jewel,  
A patriot breast must know no price too dear;—  
Not ev'n a daughter's blood!—Remember *Tarquin*,  
His exil'd race, and *Brutus'* guilty sons;  
Great *Curtius*, *Cocles*, and th' *Horatian* brothers!

Heroes

# VIRGINIA.

69

Heroes of old, who for their country bled,  
And all th'illustrious list of mighty dead !  
Warm'd with their distant rays, let us aspire  
To trace their steps, and emulate their fire !  
T' extend our fame beyond this narrow span,  
And in the Roman to forget the man !





# EPILOGUE.

Written by Mr. GARRICK.

Spoken by Mrs. CIBBE .

**T**HE Poet's pen, can like a Conjuror's wand,  
Or kill, or raise his Heroine at command :  
*And I shall, spirit-like, before I sink,  
Not courteously enquire, but tell you what you think.  
From top to bottom, I shall make you stare,  
By hitting all your judgments to a hair !*

*And first, with you above, I shall begin—[Upper Gal.  
Good-natur'd souls, they're ready all to grin.  
Tho' twelve-pence seat you there, so near the cieling,  
The folks below can't boast a better feeling.  
No high bred prud'ry in your region lurks,  
You boldly laugh and cry, as Nature works.*

Says JOHN to TOM, (*ay—there they sit together,  
As honest Britons as e'er trod on leather :*)  
“ 'Tween you and I, my friend, 'tis very vild,  
“ That old VERGEENUS should have stuck his child :  
“ I would have hang'd him for't, had I been ruler,  
“ And duck'd that APUS too, by way of cooler.”—

Some



## E P I L O G U E.

*Some Maiden-Dames, who hold the Middle-Floor,  
And fly from naughty man at forty-four ; [Middle Gal.  
With turn'd-up eyes, applaud VIRGINIA's 'scape,  
And vow they'd do the same to shun a rape ;  
So very chaste, they live in constant fears,  
And apprehension strengthens with their years.*

*Ye Bucks, who from the Pit your terrors send,  
Yet love distressed damsels to befriend ;  
You think this tragic joke too far was carried ;  
And wish, to set all right, the maid had married :  
You'd rather see (if so the fates had will'd)  
Ten wives be kind, than one poor virgin kill'd——*

*May I approach unto the Boxes, pray——  
And there search out a judgment on the Play ?  
In vain, alas ! I should attempt to find it——  
Fine Ladies see a Play, but never mind it——  
'Tis vulgar to be mov'd by acted passion,  
Or form opinions, till they're fix'd by fashion.——*

*Our Author hopes, this fickle Goddess MODE,  
With us will make, at least, nine days abode ;  
To present pleasure he contracts his view,  
And leaves his future fame, to Time and You.*

*Edw Newenham*

## F I N I S.

*Decr 30 1755*



